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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts—November 3, 1973, 50 cents

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The Week in Washington

To the Brink—*John Osborne*

On Impeachment—*The Editors*

What Now?—*Alexander M. Bickel*

Actors in the Tragedy—*TRB*

Gross Miscalculation—*Nathan Lewin*

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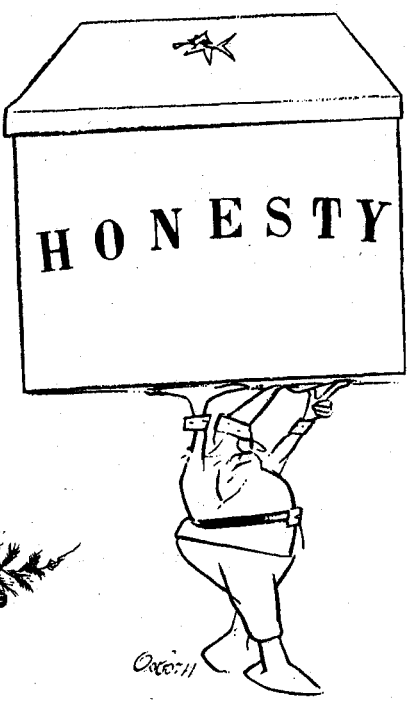

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TRB

from Washington
November 3, 1973

Actors in the Tragedy

A wave of relief swept Washington last week and the stock market went up at the breathless news that the President had changed his mind and was going to obey the law. He was going to let Judge Sirica see the tapes.

Things like that couldn't happen in fiction. Allen Drury sent us a copy of his new Washington melodrama, *Come Nineveh, Come Tyre*, with a nice inscription in the flyleaf, and he is putting his fictitious "President Edward M. Jason" through some more hoops along the Potomac in a genre he made famous with his celebrated *Advise and Consent*. Well Allen, I don't know when I'll get around to reading your novel; whatever the plot, it is pale and humdrum after our improbable character, Richard Nixon.

Figures come and go here that couldn't be matched in fiction: craggy beaked John Mitchell, former attorney general, and his pathetic wife Martha, pursued by an FBI guard who injects her with tranquilizers; G. Gordon Liddy, the romantic burglar, who thought he had been told over at CREEP headquarters to "erase" somebody and had to be pursued to set him right; Haldeman and Ehrlichman, the twin White House heavies; Bebe Rebozo, mysterious millionaire who got $100,000 in bundles of $100 bills from billionaire Howard Hughes (who buys and sells used politicians) ostensibly for President Nixon, and who stashed it away for three years without gathering interest and then quietly returned it to Hughes. Why? Nobody knows; maybe Allen Drury can tell you; I can't.

They're not all grotesque either. Here are four straight characters typecast for history rather than fiction.

To begin with, there's Jerry Ford—House minority leader. He's bland. He's handsome. Nobody dislikes Jerry. He has no enemies. And he hasn't a new idea in his head. An ideal Vice President, obviously.

Everything Richard Nixon likes, Jerry Ford likes; everything that Mr. Nixon says, Jerry Ford says. He is little Sir Echo, in a fine big handsome masculine frame. When the President said Sirica couldn't see the tapes, Jerry said fine. When the President said he could see the tapes, Jerry also said fine. It is really extraordinary that in 25 years in Congress Ford has not sponsored a single major bill you can think of or led a single big legislative fight. He wants a constitutional amendment to put the Bible back in the public schools, and he's for decency and against school busing.

Oh yes, and another thing, Ford is honest. There's a little cloud over some campaign funds that didn't get reported, but I don't believe it amounts to anything. Ford is responsible for liberal Justice Douglas staying on the Supreme Court. Douglas was about to quit when Ford brought unsuccessful impeachment action against him in 1970. Ford made his most famous utterance: "An impeachable offense is whatever a majority of the House of Representatives considers it to be at a given moment in history." A committee found no grounds for impeachment and Douglas stayed, and on October 29 has served longer than anybody else—34 years, six months and 11 days.

Next look at the conservative new acting attorney general, Robert Heron Bork, ex-Yale law professor with a red beard. He was solicitor general at Justice and when Richardson and Ruckelshaus wouldn't fire Archie Cox, Bork put in the dirk. That made him interim attorney general. Those events of a sunny Saturday, October 20, surely a novelist couldn't match! Bork is 46 and recalls brilliant, far-right Supreme Court Justice William Rehnquist, 49. Both are free-enterprisers and both repudiate the Warren activist court. Both also opposed the Public Accommodations Act of the early '60s which told victualers and hotel-keepers that they had to serve blacks. It was a "departure from freedom of the individual to choose with whom he will deal," objected Bork. (Both men, oddly, ultimately switched positions.)

Bork is a conscientious doctrinaire ideologue who feels that the important thing with blacks is to give them racial pride, not money. Writing in *The New Republic* in June 1968 he said that "the supposed Republican alliance with business" is a "myth"; that the minimum wage law has left a "toll in wasted human lives and potential," and that Richard Nixon is a "classical liberal." He still loves Nixon.

Let's take two men now, of a quite different approach. We watched Boston Brahmin Elliot Richardson at his two recent press conferences here, and were struck by the thought of how nice it is to have an occasional patrician with a sensitive code of honor in government. Of course he has resigned. Richardson's first performance was at the dismissal of Agnew; his second, a week later, was to explain why he quit over Cox's dismissal.

The scene was the same, the Great Hall of the Justice Department, and Richardson stood at a dais below two rather uncomfortable, heroic, aluminum, sparsely draped allegorical figures, the female with arms uplifted as though she had just tossed a basketball, and the male with one hand raised (the other holding a fistful of arrows and laurel) as though signaling for a free catch.

Richardson, in the Cox dismissal scenario, was rather magnificent. He had pledged to the Senate and the nation that Cox would have a free hand and when the President (who of course had also pledged it) reneged, Richardson politely quit. He couldn't do anything else, he said simply. My, what a hand he got from the Justice Department workers who filled all the spaces behind the reporters, and who clapped and clapped and whose applause, like a rising wave, finally swelled into an ovation.

Archie Cox, dismissed Watergate investigator, is our fourth real-life character. The President threw him out for coming too close to the buried bodies. Harvard Law School professor Cox has an iron-gray crewcut as wiry as a woodchuck's fur, and a rugged face that looks as though the designer had forgotten the eyebrows and pasted them on later. He has a wry, prize-fighter's grin. He made the best explanation of the tapes on TV we ever heard. Put him in knee britches and he would have done well among those forefathers in Philadelphia in 1787. He brought a bit of nobility to Washington. Mr. Integrity.

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Impeachment And the House

Since the move to impeach the President must start in the House, its 38-member Judiciary Committee emerges from obscurity and now takes center stage in the doleful drama that opened at the Watergate. Laying the groundwork for a possible impeachment of Richard Nixon is far more arduous and sensitive a task than that of Senator Ervin's committee. It is one thing to investigate the conduct of White House aides and follow up lines that might lead to the Oval Office; it is quite another to investigate the President himself. The House committee will be passing judgment on allegations that, if proved, would constitute "high crimes and misdemeanors." What are these allegations? They include presidential approval of illegal burglaries; wiretapping instigated by the White House to plug up news leaks; trading government favors for campaign contributions in cash; deliberate efforts to conceal wrongdoing; misuse of executive clemency; misleading the public on the President's personal finances; bombing Cambodia and keeping it secret from Congress. The first question one asks is whether a committee as large and politically diverse as Judiciary can agree on what an impeachable offense is; and if it can, whether the members will be able to function effectively as a fact-finding and prosecutorial body, directing what is bound to be a complex and highly controversial investigation. In our judgment it would have been preferable for the House to have set up a smaller, select committee on impeachment. That idea, however, is moot. The Democratic leadership decided otherwise.

House Judiciary will therefore proceed to take sworn testimony and compile a record for eventual presentation to the full House. Here, it will function as a grand jury. All 38 committee members almost certainly will want to have a part in the direction of the forthcoming hearings, however, and that is bound to be awkward. How dispassionate and integral a record will be written, with questions coming from Nixon supporters on the Republican side, and on the other from such aggressive Democrats as Rep. Robert Drinan of Massachusetts, who in July introduced one of the first impeachment resolutions?

If strong personal feelings portend severe strains on the committee, so does the prospect of immense publicity. Though some testimony may be taken by the committee in open hearings, much will be heard

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in closed sessions. Grand juries are anonymous and silent. Will the Judiciary Committee be similarly restrained when it is considering information on alleged improprieties or worse by a President who is also the leader of the Republican Party? How is justice to be done and public confidence in the proceedings sustained? The House has no broad base of public trust on which it can rest secure. Its members—save perhaps for Speaker Carl Albert and Minority Leader and Vice President-designate Gerald Ford—are relative unknowns nationally. All that can change overnight because of television. What effect will national exposure have on the 38 members and on their chairman, the heretofore uncelebrated Peter Rodino, Jr. of New Jersey? The paucity of national media coverage has permitted the House to act in its own haphazard way without wide public notice. Speaker Albert shies away from the press and television. He, the Democratic leadership and most committee chairmen like the freedom to wheel and deal that is facilitated by the media's disinterest in what they do.

To head off such political and publicity problems as these and to organize its work properly, the committee must seek out and hire, as Rep. Rodino now says it will, an outstanding special counsel to direct its work. The example of Elliot Richardson's selection of Archibald Cox is worth emulation. A Nixon Republican, Richardson turned to a highly qualified Kennedy Democrat, gave him independence, authority and the right to choose his own staff. Chairman Rodino and others in the Democratic leadership at first sought advice informally from such party legal stalwarts as Clark Clifford and Joseph Califano. Now they must find an exceptionally qualified lawyer, perhaps though not necessarily a Republican, who can master the investigatorial, legal and public relations aspects of the job and do it with the crisp efficiency and fairness shown by the late Joseph Welch during the Army-McCarthy hearings of 1954. An artful counsel who can command the respect of a committee as diverse as Judiciary should be able to lay a similar claim upon the public.

The committee already has before it two other items of unfinished business. The first is the Ford vice presidential nomination. Staff investigators are at work and the committee is awaiting FBI and IRS reports. No system has yet been worked out for allocating question time among the 38 members during the Ford hearings—sessions that may get live television coverage. Since Speaker Albert wants the Ford nomination to be dealt with as quickly as possible—in part to avoid the dire possibility of his inheriting the presidency—little delay is expected once the investigative reports are in and the hearings begin. With Ford confirmed at least one partisan time bomb will have been defused.

The other item of unfinished business is the proposal to set up a special prosecutor's office outside the control of the White House. Elliot Richardson said last week that what was at stake in the Cox firing was "the very integrity of the government process." Although Richardson praised Assistant Attorney General Henry Petersen, who has now been given direction of the Cox investigation, he also endorsed the idea of a new special prosecutor. Allowing the Justice Department to complete the Watergate investigations, Richardson said, "is fraught with great difficulty" for Petersen. The "great difficulty" was not defined, but the Ervin committee record suggests what it might be. Petersen was himself involved in Watergate-related decisions that are under investigation. He was reportedly a prospective witness in the Cox investigation. It was Petersen in August 1972 whom former White House Counsel John Dean approached to get assurances that Donald Segretti, the hired political saboteur, would not be questioned by the grand jury about his White House directed work. Petersen responded that prosecutor Earl Silbert would not inquire into activities other than the Watergate break-in. It was Petersen in the summer of 1972 who told acting FBI Director L. Patrick Gray that he need not investigate either Segretti or the possible violation of campaign fund laws that centered on Mexican checks that had passed through the bank of one Watergate burglar. Petersen relayed to Dean reports of the grand jury's progress, as disclosed to him by Silbert.

When, on September 16, 1972, presidential candidate George McGovern attacked the previous day's Water-

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gate indictments as a whitewash, it was Petersen later that afternoon whose name was attached to a Justice Department press release which criticized McGovern, declared the investigation had been one of the most complete undertaken during Petersen's years with the department and concluded that the trial would prove that no other persons were involved in the Watergate scandal. It was Petersen, too, who supplied a key letter in October 1972 which said that a proposed investigation of the Watergate break-ins by a House Banking Committee would hurt the Justice Department investigation. That letter was used to persuade committee members to vote against their chairman, Wright Patman, who wanted to pursue the inquiry. In December 1972 it was Petersen to whom Dean confided he had given L. Patrick Gray politically sensitive documents from the White House safe of Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt. Dean told Petersen the material he gave Gray was not related to the case. Although Hunt maintained that key documents were missing, Petersen did not pursue the matter at the time, beyond telling Dean to tell the truth at the trial. Dean, however, was never called as a witness, since Hunt pleaded guilty. In March 1973, when questions about the Hunt safe material were again raised, Petersen asked Gray if he ever got documents from Dean. Gray lied and denied he had. Again Petersen, although he had before him directly conflicting information, failed to follow up.

During the last days of his troubles, Vice President Agnew charged that Petersen had been overzealous in the Agnew case so as to make up for his failures in Watergate. That was unjust. Petersen deserves credit for pressing a tough investigation and strong penalties for the former Vice President. Nevertheless, to have Petersen running the Watergate investigation is to oblige Petersen to investigate his own past. A new prosecutor, independent of the Justice Department and therefore of the President, would help restore the public's hope that the truths about Watergate will finally, fully come to light.

That seems to be the view of chairman Rodino and his colleagues. They plan expeditiously to approve and send to the House floor a bill reestablishing the special prosecutor's office that was wiped out by the President when he fired Cox. This time the prosecutor will derive his authority from and be responsible to the Congress. He will pick up where Cox left off, following through on the various Watergate-related inquiries and prosecuting those deemed in violation of the law. Should evidence develop linking the President to any crime, that evidence would eventually be delivered to House Judiciary.

Meanwhile the committee should promptly collect the necessary facts and resolve the Ford nomination. With that done, it can get on with its investigation of the case against the President and whether he should be removed from office.

Oil Squeeze

The Arabs have cut us off. For the moment, at least, the United States will neither be allowed to extract oil from Arab land nor import Arab oil extracted by others. Within the last few weeks several US petroleum holdings have been nationalized, the Arab nations have embargoed direct oil shipments to the US and reduced their oil output, hoping this will prevent other countries from sharing their meager supplies with America. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait (the two biggest producers) have reduced output by 10 percent; Iraq, Libya, Egypt and the smaller countries have cut back five percent. White House energy experts say this may eliminate as much as 10 percent of our traditional oil imports, but they cannot say what impact it will have. No one knows how long the embargo will last now that the fighting has at least temporarily been halted.

What is so curious is that what until recently was a national energy crisis has suddenly become a manageable problem. Government leaders have shown little alarm in public about the embargo, leading the public to think falsely that we may not even feel the squeeze. Suggestions for solving the crisis generally follow the theme set by the President in his recent energy speeches in September and October, expressing the need for "self-sufficiency" and expansion of supply. At the moment the most important Nixon proposals in Congress would 1) deregulate the price of natural gas, 2) make it easier to build deep-water oil ports, 3) speed up construction of the Alaska pipeline and 4) increase federal aid to experimental energy projects, with a heavy emphasis on coal research. But supply, as anyone who has spent a moment with the statistics knows, is not the problem. We do not need more tankers, bigger pipelines, new refineries nearly so much as we need a new sense of what it costs to burn the volume of energy used in this country every day. A realistic leadership would seize upon the present embargo as the ideal occasion for showing the country —businessmen as well as consumers—how to eliminate the frivolous use of energy. It would not simply allow the cost of fuel to rise to luxury level.

The government's response to the newest aspect of the energy crisis has been the same as its responses to other economic and political crises. Nothing is ventured until too late; and what is ventured then is little. The administration has been tested twice on the energy issue, and twice it has shown that it is inclined to let things drift, to put off the tough decisions. The first test had to do with the environment. The Clean Air Act of 1970 sets stiff federal standards but most states have welcomed them. Utilities and factories that once burned high-sulphur coal and oil have been forced to change, but for the most part they have accomplished this not by cleaning the fuels they already have, but by trying to buy hard-to-get clean fuels. Clean oil, coal

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and natural gas are now in very short supply.

Last winter, when the first heating oil shortages appeared in the Midwest and New England, local officials were pressured to relax air quality standards temporarily and burn dirtier fuel. Some gave in. The administration didn't offer to help until January 17 when the President made a belated decision to lift oil import quotas. The government action came too late to have much effect on winter supplies, but it did prevent last summer's mild gasoline shortage from becoming a bad one. Now we have come full cycle. In preparation for worse shortages expected this winter, Mr. Nixon has said again that states should lower their air standards where necessary to meet "the immediate problem." But between last year's immediate problem and this year's, he has not urged factories to install stack gas "scrubbers" that clean pollutants from factory smoke and lessen the need for high quality fuel. Nor has he suggested that the government might increase its financial aid to companies that want to convert to clean furnaces.

The second challenge the administration failed to meet with any force was the exploitation of the summer oil shortage by major oil companies. Earlier this year when crude oil was extremely hard to come by, the major producers began telling their independent competitors that they would no longer supply them with crude oil as they had in the past. Since most independent companies rely on the majors, the change in policy was devastating. Besides closing hundreds of independent gasoline dealers, it decreased the country's overall petroleum output because independent refiners couldn't operate at full capacity. The administration didn't speak out against the hoarding of crude oil, but the Federal Trade Commission did cite the eight major companies for violating antitrust law. The head of the new White House energy policy office said the FTC charge was unfortunate, that it would only confuse matters.

Before the summer shortage was in full swing, Nixon's energy advisers attempted to start a "voluntary" allocation program, meaning that, for the good of the country, major companies were asked to share their crude and finished products with independent competitors. The program didn't work. Independent refiners were short of crude oil requirements by 460,000 barrels a day earlier this year; with voluntary allocation and leasing of new government oil wells on the Outer Continental Shelf, that deficit dropped to about 220,000 barrels a day. The figures for refined products are similarly discouraging. Senator Ribicoff's staff surveyed heating oil reserves in the east this fall and found that major oil companies were doing better than last year and independents were doing worse. That isn't surprising, but the degree of disparity is. In September the majors had 14 percent more heating oil in reserve than at the same time last year, while independents had 50 percent less. Furthermore the majors achieved a record summer fill of reserve tanks —three million barrels more than before. The independents suffered a deficit of 3.1 million barrels. Ribicoff believes that had the majors been forced to share these reserves as in the past, they would have imported more heating oil for themselves and thus increased the total supply. Nixon's energy men disagree, and they remain opposed to the idea even though they were driven to begin compulsory allocation of propane on October 1 and allocation of heating, jet and diesel oil on October 12.

A third, more serious challenge has appeared. If the Arab embargo lasts even a few months, it will compound the mild shortages being felt now and trigger reverberating shortages next summer. It will also deprive the country of one of its steady clean oil suppliers—Libya. The White House is working on "contingency plans" which aren't public yet but which may bear some resemblance to an emergency energy bill introduced by Senator Henry Jackson. The Jackson bill would require cities and states to develop rationing plans within 60 days of enactment, and it would empower the President to declare an "energy emergency" in all or part of the country, activating the local plans. Jackson's cutbacks would be severe, asking for 10 percent reduction in fuel use in 10 days and 25 percent in four weeks. The administration likes the idea, but not Jackson's mandatory approach.

The President has put his hope in voluntary conservation. The Treasury Department, for example, recently said that the entire loss of Arab oil could be made up if more people would drive in car pools, turn down thermostats three degrees and properly insulate their houses and offices. The White House launched its energy conservation program in earnest on October 9, and through the Citizens Advisory Council on Environmental Quality published a "citizens action guide" packed with statistics and suggestions. As a consumer's guide it is good, offering stronger ideas than any that have come from the administration before. It focuses the attack on the automobile ("America's thirsty machine"), suggesting that people should buy smaller cars with fewer gadgets. It urges people to support mass transit, recycling projects and campaigns to put efficiency labels on electric appliances. The appeal will have an effect while the embargo continues. But once the sense of crisis has passed, will there be any incentive, other than sheer cost, to restrain wasteful uses of energy.

At the moment demand for all forms of energy is growing faster than supply, a situation produced only partly by the sluggish expansion of refineries and resources. The real problem is the demand itself. Until now the President has sought to increase our capacity to supply this demand, but as the shortages have become serious, he has begun to suggest that people buy less. Normally this would be heresy on Madison

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Avenue, but even the oil companies this year, while promoting themselves, are telling us to use less. The Arab embargo will test the depth of the government's commitment to the conservation idea, for if the program is to have any impact beyond the moment, industries must be urged to rethink their approach to commerce, and the urging must begin now. Otherwise we may assume that today's conservation is just an expedient to help us through to tomorrow's extravagance. If the government wants to pursue a long-range conservation plan, there are scores of good ideas that it might test. Some of these will be discussed in a later piece.

Eliot Marshall

War Powers Bill

The Veto Is Wrong

A socialist orator is supposed to have once said that "while yesterday we stood at the edge of a precipice, today, thanks to the Socialists, we have taken a step ahead." Apparently the editors of *The New Republic* believe that the enactment of the war powers bill would be such a step. In "A Bad War Powers Bill," (October 27 issue) they contend that this measure "defeats its own purpose" and that it would somehow expand the President's authority to draw us into new wars. Mr. Nixon, for his own reasons, vetoed the bill.

As a member of the conference committee that approved the war powers bill, I feel that *The New Republic* seriously misinterprets this unique legislation. It does place important new restrictions on the President's war-making power: first, he must consult with Congress before introducing US armed forces into any hostilities; second, he must provide a full report to Congress within 48 hours after taking such action; third, he must withdraw troops within 60 days if Congress has not expressly authorized continued US military involvement (a 30-day extension is permitted if the safety of the troops requires it); fourth, he must immediately withdraw troops if Congress mandates it through a concurrent resolution, a measure which does not require a presidential signature.

This bill does not expand the President's authority. It states that none of its provisions shall be construed as granting any authority to the President "which he would not have had" in the absence of the bill.

The first section simply recites the constitutional powers of the President to introduce armed forces into hostilities when 1) war has been declared, 2) a specific statutory authorization is on the books, and 3) a national emergency is created "by attack on the United States, its territories or possessions, or its armed forces." Despite the clarity of this language *The New Republic* sees loopholes where none exist.

The editorial maintains that an attack on the armed forces anywhere gives the President authority to act. But this interpretation ignores the words "national emergency." As I pointed out on the floor of the House, an attack on an isolated unit of armed forces does not constitute a national emergency. The 1964 PT boat attack on destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin could not be considered a national emergency. A nuclear attack on the Sixth Fleet clearly would.

Curiously the editors contend that there is no restraint on the President's authority to use US troops to rescue American citizens abroad. But we recite the President's powers in the bill and rescuing US citizens is not one of them. Such a provision was included in the Senate bill but was dropped in conference.

The editorial is flatly wrong in claiming that the bill would allow the President to commit troops under treaties that have been ratified. Exactly the opposite is true. The bill says that such authority shall *not* be inferred from any existing or prospective treaty, unless there is *legislation in addition* that specifically authorizes the President to commit troops.

Finally, *TNR* ignores a key provision that gives Congress authority to mandate military disengagement at any time. The constitutionality of this provision has been questioned but this new authority would clearly operate as a powerful restraint on any President.

In large part the war powers bill is significant as a political document rather than as a legal statement. Sen. Fulbright emphasized this in urging support for the final bill, having opposed the Senate version.

Legal restraints on the President have proved to be ineffective during the last 25 years, as *The New Republic* correctly points out. Most conferees accepted this fact acknowledging that the President may continue to ignore statutory limitations even if the war powers bill were to become law. We recognize that the President might have the power to use military power beyond the territorial limits of the United States, but the question of his authority would emerge as a clearly defined issue. Congress could call him to account under the terms of this bill. That point is emphasized by Harvard law professor Roger Fisher in a recent letter to some House members urging them to override the President's veto: ". . . the political restraints that the resolution establishes should far outweigh any effect of opening the door. The door now, unfortunately, is wide open. Speeches on the floor of the House are likely to be a less effective way of closing it than are the procedural requirements of the joint resolution. The requirements of reporting to Congress and the necessity of a congressional debate should cast their shadow forward and operate as an appreciable deterrent. Everyone knows the purpose of the resolution and the mood of the Congress which adopted it. Its political impact on a future President will be a reflec-

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tion of these items, not the result of intricate legalistic arguments from language."

If Congress fails to override the veto, we will have lost an opportunity to restrain growing presidential usurpation of Congress' war-making responsibilities. To leave the President unrestrained is to take inordinate risks with our democratic system.

Donald M. Fraser

REPRESENTATIVE FRASER *(D, Minn.) is national chairman of Americans for Democratic Action.*

Did We Dream It?

The Week in Washington

The Nixon Watch

To the Brink

Here is the gist of the story, to the extent that it was known on October 24, of the President's steady, deliberate, calculated march to the brink of ruin during the nine days that began on October 15. What is meant by deliberate calculation is that every step along the ruinous way was carefully considered by the President and by assistants and consultants who are reputed to be among the brainiest men in his service. Only one of the consequences, the discharge of special Watergate prosecutor Archibald Cox and the transfer of his staff and functions to the Department of Justice, was foreseen and intended. Among the consequences that were not foreseen and not intended, and that therefore reflect in the most serious fashion upon the President's judgment and upon his capacity to govern the country, were the resignations of Attorney General Elliot Richardson and Deputy Attorney General William Ruckelshaus; the instant and enormous increase in public and congressional demand for the resignation or impeachment of the President; and, in a desperate reversal and maneuver to save himself and his presidency, his abject surrender to the orders of two courts that he turn over to a federal judge the taped recordings of presidential conversations that could either convict or acquit him of complicity in and concealment of Watergate crimes ranging from burglary, political espionage and subornation of perjury to the illegal collection and felonious misuse of campaign funds.

The calculations and decisions that led to these consequences sprang from an aspect of the White House atmosphere that I described in this journal's October 20 issue: a sense and a fear that the President and his staff establishment could never recover completely from the demoralizing effects of the Watergate scandals and that the prolonged process of rumor, suspicion, allegation and evidence of wrongdoing would never end. I assumed but didn't know in early October that Mr. Nixon shared this sense of frustration and apprehension with the assistants who expressed it. The accounts and explanations, publicly and privately given, of the events that the President set in train on the 15th indicated that he not only shared it but suffered from it to a greater degree than most and perhaps all of his senior associates did. It appears from the accounts and explanations relied upon here that Mr. Nixon decided during the weekend preceding Monday, October 15, that he had to end what he called "this hemorrhage," referring to the remorseless drainage of his credibility and prestige, and that in order to end it he had to do two things. One of them was to back away from and compromise his previously adamant insistence that neither Congress nor the courts had the right and power to compel him or any President to disclose taped or written records of presidential conversations and transactions. He also decided that he had to abolish or at the very least neutralize the independent Watergate special prosecution force that the Senate Judiciary Committee compelled him to let his third attorney general, Elliot Richardson, set up outside the Department of Justice and under Archibald Cox last May. Both of these objectives were pursued secretly, simultaneously and by the same means until the first of them was acknowledged and briefly boasted about. The second objective was never acknowledged. It was not convincingly denied, either, and it was made known by covert leakage from the White House staff for a reason that says a good deal, all of it depressing, about the plight and nature of the Nixon presidency. The reason was that Nixon assistants deemed it necessary to prove to the media and to the public that the President was neither off his rocker nor afraid that he would be shown to have been a party to illegal and impeachable behavior if Cox and his staff of prosecutors were allowed to continue their investigations with the zeal and vigor they were displaying and to seek and obtain evidence from White House files in support of

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their allegations.

Public and congressional reaction to the firing of Cox and the resignations of Richardson and Ruckelshaus indicated to Nixon assistants that the President was widely thought to have acted rashly and foolishly, in a fit of pique at best and of irrational frustration and anger at worst. Nothing vexes the President's associates and, one may suspect, Mr. Nixon himself, more than the impression dating from his early years in politics that behind a mask of phenomenally rigid self-control he is unduly excitable, emotionally insecure and unstable, and likely to crack under extreme pressure unless he watches himself and conserves his energies very carefully. Some of Mr. Nixon's past characterizations of himself and occasional instances of his observed behavior tend to validate the impression. In any case the sense of vulnerability that the impression causes contributed to a conclusion at the White House that the evidently widespread notion that the President had acted impulsively and out of fear had to be rebutted immediately and strongly. The rebuttal was conveyed to reporters by the sort of unattributable leaks that the President's people resent and deplore when he is the victim. It was to the effect that the decision to remove or vitiate the special prosecutor and his crew of zealots was taken with the greatest deliberation, for absolutely necessary reasons, and was implemented coolly and skillfully. Far from arising from irrational anger, the story went, the effort and outcome were examples of Nixon planning and execution at their best.

The fundamental reason offered was that the Nixon presidency could not survive if it continued to be subjected to reports of new allegations and investigations and to constant demands for evidence from the President's confidential files. According to the White House story the apprehended danger to the President and his presidency was not that the allegations were certain or likely to be proven true. It was rather the dreadful erosion of confidence—public confidence in the President and his administration, and the confidence of the President and his officials in themselves—that was so clearly occurring and increasing. It could not be factually alleged, and was not alleged, that the special prosecutor and his staff originated most of these reports. By comparison with the staff of the Senate Watergate investigating committee, for instance, the Cox staff had been a model of discretion. But, in the White House view, the mere existence of the special prosecution force and the announced scope of its investigations contributed to a general impression that the Watergate evils already exposed were as nothing by comparison with the evils yet to be exposed and proven. It was the special prosecutor's suit for access to nine of the Nixon tapes that was forcing that explosive issue and the President's claim of executive privilege and protected confidentiality toward decision in the Supreme Court. As Mr. Nixon and his associates saw things, it was the special prosecutor who was putting the President in the wretched position of appearing to maintain while having to deny that he was above the law and capable of defying court orders. Beyond all else the knowledge at the White House that the special prosecutor and his staff were seeking indictments and preparing for trials that would involve Nixon friends and associates, past and present, in numbers and on a scale that would keep the Watergate scandal and its extensions in the public mind throughout the President's second term compounded his decision that the Cox operation had to be terminated.

Here we encounter a kind of madness, a contradiction that the purveyors of the White House explanation did not even try to reconcile. The contradiction lay in the claim that the President's purpose was not actually to halt or limit proper investigations and prosecutions, but only to bring the process of investigation and prosecution back where Mr. Nixon and his lawyers thought it belonged, within the Department of Justice and under his and his attorney general's control. In order to accomplish this purpose the President had Attorney General Richardson go through the motions of trying to negotiate an agreement with Archibald Cox that neither Mr. Nixon nor Elliot Richardson could possibly have expected Cox to accept and work under. There are two versions of this projected and aborted agreement, Elliot Richardson's and Richard Nixon's. Richardson proposed to Cox that he settle for submission to a federal court and to a Watergate grand jury of summaries of nine Nixon tapes instead of complying with orders of Judge John Sirica and of a federal appellate court that Judge Sirica be allowed to examine the original tapes and excerpt pertinent Watergate material from them. The President indicated in his version that Richardson also proposed to Cox that he submit to and obey an order that he seek no other tapes or records of presidential conversations and actions. Richardson made no such proposal. Instead he insisted throughout five days of negotiation with Cox and with the White House assistants and lawyers who were acting for the President that the question of further requests for presidential tapes and documents be postponed. The attorney general's effort to avert a conclusive confrontation between Cox and the President seems to have led to some ambiguity and to an impression among the President's people that Richardson would go along with, even if he would not explicitly convey, any order to Cox to halt his demands for presidential evidence. However that may have been, the President and his agents certainly knew throughout the proceeding that Archibald Cox, a famously independent and touchy character, would never submit to such an order.

On the sixth day, in the first of the only two personal meetings and talks that Richardson had with the President throughout the whole affair, the attorney

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general told Mr. Nixon directly what he'd been telling General Alexander Haig, the staff chief, and the President's lawyers. This was that Cox would not accept a flat order to limit his investigations and demands for White House evidence, that Richardson would convey no such order to Cox and that he, Richardson, would resign rather than dismiss Cox. I say "told"; Richardson may have, as he intimated at a press conference, relied in part upon admonitions and warnings that he had previously conveyed to the President through Haig and the lawyers. The point is that Mr. Nixon could not have been under any misapprehension when he ordered Richardson to fire Cox and Richardson resigned, and when he then had General Haig order Deputy Attorney General Ruckelshaus to fire Cox and Ruckelshaus resigned. Solicitor General Robert Bork, the acting attorney general by statutory succession, fired Cox. Mr. Nixon announced his complete compliance with the appellate court's order to give Judge Sirica the nine tapes Cox had tried to subpoena and an impression spread that the resignations and the firing would have been averted if the President had only announced full compliance in the first place. This impression was in error. Elliot Richardson stated the essence of the matter at his press conference when he said: "The President was very deliberate, very restrained in my meeting with him, but he was absolutely firm on the course he had determined upon."

It was said at the start of this report that only the dismissal of Archibald Cox was intended and that the resignations of Richardson and Ruckelshaus, with the consequent shocks to the country and to any confidence in Richard Nixon that may have remained by then, were not intended. Madness would have had to prevail at the White House if the resignations were either intended from the first or invited at the last. They were invited.

John Osborne

Firing Cox

Gross Miscalculation

By their own admission, President Nixon and his advisers "miscalculated" when they tried to dictate a Watergate tapes "compromise" to the courts and the country. Their announced reversal of October 23 and the decision to comply fully with court orders regarding these pieces of evidence deflects, at least temporarily, talk of impeachment. There remains, however, lingering speculation that the events of the preceding week were staged by the White House so as to achieve Special Prosecutor Cox's dismissal. The documents disclosed by Mr. Cox at his Saturday news conference reflected apparent good-faith efforts by former Attorney General Richardson to devise a procedure, within the framework of judicial supervision, for examination and verification of the tapes by someone other than Judge Sirica. Cox responded with seemingly valid objections to Richardson's proposal, and their differences were the kind that conscientious lawyers could reasonably debate. The same could not be said of the terms imposed by the President's announcement of October 19, which bypassed the court rather than operate under its supervision, contemplated narrative "summaries" rather than accurate and precise reflections of actual conversations, and set down extraneous conditions on the gathering of future evidence that had nothing to do with the particular tapes that were under subpoena. Mr. Cox apparently felt—as he disclosed at his press conference—that the White House, rather than yielding somewhat to achieve agreement as one would expect to happen in any bona fide negotiation, was presenting him on the evening of October 18 with nonnegotiable conditions that he was sure to reject. All, of course, being a prelude to the discharge that, according to Mr. Richardson, had been suggested repeatedly at the White House and had consistently been viewed by him as "totally unacceptable."

One suspects that those who steered the President into this domestic Bay of Pigs derive some comfort from the fact that, at the least, Archie Cox is gone. But the forced departure of Cox may prove to be the grossest miscalculation in the entire adventure. To Mr. Nixon and his immediate entourage Cox was a Kennedy Democrat who was using the special prosecutor's job as a means of achieving partisan political goals. That estimate, which Elliot Richardson at his own news conference said was commonly held at the White House, reflects both the shallowness and the paranoia of the people around the President, if not of Mr. Nixon himself. Richardson's initial selection of Cox as special prosecutor was, in fact, a masterful political stroke because—as the resounding approval at his confirmation proved—it restored public confidence in the nonpartisan nature of the criminal investigation while putting in place a man whose public and private careers had always been singlemindedly and incorruptibly guided by the rule of law.

What Elliot Richardson knew—and what Mr. Nixon apparently could not understand—was that to a man committed to principle as is Cox, it was a great personal challenge to keep his investigation bound not only to the letter of the law but also to the appearance of justice. Substantial affirmative efforts were made early in the formation of the Cox task force to recruit Republican lawyers, and public steps were taken to keep the Democrats from gaining political advantage by the Watergate disclosures. It is now forgotten, but almost the first formal actions Mr. Cox took after assuming office were motions filed by him with Judge Sirica to keep immunized witnesses off the nation's

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television screens. Democratic politicians and supporters of the Ervin committee began to wonder then whether Cox was not being too soft.

The extent to which Mr. Cox was bending over backward to be totally fair was shown, as well, by the silence maintained over months while, as he ultimately disclosed, his investigation was being frustrated by the White House's refusal to produce documents. It would not be fair, he thought, to make a public outcry over extraordinary delays in complying with simple requests when related issues as to executive privilege were being fought in the courts. And so, with patience, he waited in pursuing leads that any other prosecutor would have treated as red-hot and would have carried to the public if investigation had been hindered.

No one likes to be investigated; it is a degrading and bruising experience. So there were press reports that some of the former White House aides complained to the President that they were being mistreated by Cox's men. Many of the lawyers on the Cox task force learned the ropes in the leading United States attorneys' offices in the country and there is an all-too-common tendency on the part of young prosecutors to chew up criminal suspects. But there has not been a single instance in which it was reported or even hinted that Archibald Cox had personally been anything other than a paradigm of fairness.

I readily admit to a lack of total objectivity with regard to Mr. Cox. Between 1963 and 1965 I was one of his assistants while he was solicitor general, and I saw the same punctiliousness that marked the brief history of the special prosecutor. Probably never before—and surely never since—in the history of the solicitor general's office did the government admit as often as it did during Cox's tenure that a position on which it had won in lower courts was wrong. Solicitor General Cox saw his job as that of a buffer between the zealous advocacy of government lawyers who treat each case as a personal contest and the disinterested judgment of the Supreme Court. Much the same attitude emerged from the few public statements he made as special prosecutor.

In his post-dismissal news conference Elliot Richardson observed that the hardest decisions Cox would have been called on to make would have been the decisions *not* to indict. For a prosecutor, he said, it is much easier to indict than to decide that the evidence is insufficient. The grand irony of the discharge of Archibald Cox is that he, probably more than any conceivable replacement—be he dependent or independent prosecutor—would have been able to reach that judgment calmly and have it accepted by the Congress and the nation.

If, as now appears probable, Congress authorizes Judge Sirica to appoint a new independent prosecutor, the chances are greater than they would have been with Cox at the helm that suspects against whom there is slight evidence will be charged. Even if the prosecution remains within the Justice Department, that result is a probable one. Obedience to White House inclinations, an apparent virtue in 1972, now has all the attractions of leprosy. To prove their own integrity Justice Department prosecutors are no longer able to give the benefit of the doubt to potential defendants. Absent any future instructions placing evidence beyond limits—which would probably rouse the nation again—the President and the associates whom he may have been wanting to protect stand in greater personal jeopardy today than they were in when Archibald Cox was around.

Nathan Lewin

Keeping Our Heads

What Now?

Aside from the venality and abuse of powers that were its breeding ground, the Watergate affair has been characterized again and again by miscalculation, fumbling, impatience with the ways of the law (which is a more common form of disrespect for it than outright defiance) and intense bursts of hysteria—all manifesting themselves in and out of the White House.

No lethal wounds would have been inflicted on the legal order—or the system of law, as it came to be called during the fabled weekend of October 20-22—if the President had continued to insist on the so-called Stennis compromise over the tapes instead of caving in, as he ultimately did, and handing them over to Judge Sirica. The President had every legal right to discharge Archibald Cox. It was a move for which he was politically, not legally accountable, and for which he has been and will continue to be held to political account. In discharging Cox the President broke at least an implied promise of his own and an explicit one made by Elliot Richardson. Consequently Richardson had to go. For his promise was the condition of Richardson's confirmation in office, and keeping it was for him the honorable condition of remaining in office.

The discharge of Cox raised the serious legal question whether there was anything left of Cox's lawsuit concerning the tapes. The President's power to discharge Cox had all along been a time bomb ticking away, and there had always been a question whether the lawsuit was, in the constitutional sense, a case or controversy over which federal courts could exercise jurisdiction. If the proposed Stennis compromise and the Cox discharge had been first announced in Judge Sirica's courtroom, in the posture of informing the judge of the changed aspect of the case and of submitting to him the legal proposition that the case had

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been rendered moot and that there was no valid judicial decree of standing that the President was now required to obey—if that had been done, the political storm would doubtless still have raged, but there might have been less talk of defiance of judicial decrees and of the impending demise of the American legal order. Judge Sirica might or might not have accepted the legal proposition submitted to him by the President's lawyers, but he would not have had the last word on the matter. The issue would have been subject to further decision on appeal, and only if he ultimately lost would the President have been confronted with a judicial decree he would have been required to obey.

From the beginning the expectation that a prosecutor wholly free of presidential control could be established within the executive branch was always fraught with illusion. The total independence of such a prosecutor may be a political fact for a space of time, but it is never a legal fact. Harry Truman, in the face of more ordinary scandals, to be sure, than Mr. Nixon is enmeshed in, was once prevailed upon to appoint a special prosecutor. His name was Newbold Morris, and he lasted nowhere near as long as Mr. Cox. Morris did not get along with the attorney general of his day as well as Cox did with Richardson, indeed not well at all, but when Morris was discharged the attorney general also went, if at the President's wish, rather than, as in Richardson's case, at his own.

The fact about the American Constitution is that there is no real power countervailing the President's within the executive branch, and there cannot be. And there is and ought to be no active, prosecutorial power in the courts. The courts sit in judgment. They do not investigate on their own, they do not prosecute, they are not parties to cases. Countervailing power is in Congress. When the President's prosecutorial good faith is in question, therefore, because his close associates are charged with misconduct and crime, or because his own involvement is suspected, only Congress can exercise independent investigatory powers. It cannot prosecute—save by impeaching—but it can investigate.

Where lower-rank officials are involved, the existing methods for enforcing congressional subpoenas and making the investigation effective are sufficient. These methods are two in number. One is subsequent criminal prosecution for disobeying congressional subpoenas, and the other is direct action by the Congress itself, which has power to arrest a recalcitrant witness and hold him until he sees the light. But when the President and his asserted executive privilege are involved, these existing methods do not suffice. Congress then, like a grand jury or a federal administrative agency, needs instant access to a court for an order enforcing its subpoenas. Under existing statutes, as Judge Sirica held in the Ervin committee's suit for the tapes, Congress appears to have no such access. It can readily give itself that access, however, by enacting a simple statute, conceivably over a presidential veto, although it is difficult to see what political position the President would take in vetoing such a statute, especially now.

The special prosecutor and the attorney general have departed, and we have been through an episode of all losses and virtually no gains for anyone, from any point of view, excepting only that the President has finally been brought to accept, at least this once, what is in law and policy the right and wise procedure with respect to the tapes. But the criminal investigation looking to Watergate indictments continues. Assistant Attorney General Petersen, who is in immediate charge of it, is known to have stumbled a bit in the earlier stages of the investigation. But he had the confidence of Attorney General Richardson, and he has that of Acting Attorney General Robert H. Bork, who is in ultimate charge. And there is no more reason to doubt the capacity or the integrity of the new acting attorney general than there ever was to doubt the capacity or the integrity of Messrs. Richardson and Cox. Yet it remains true that no one within the executive branch, the new team any more than the old, can be fully independent of the President. The only independent power that any executive officer has is the power to resign.

Charges against the Nixon administration continue to unfold. There is the curious matter of the $100,000 that moved from Howard Hughes to the President's friend, Mr. Rebozo, and back again after an interestless sojourn in a safe deposit box. There are acknowledged wiretaps of extended duration, which the administration seeks to justify on apparently nonexistent national security grounds. And the suspicions will not down that there is more. If all or even part of what is widely suspected is true, there are grounds for impeachment. If the suspicions are not dispelled, there cannot be an effective presidency during the remainder of Mr. Nixon's term. The Ervin committee investigation has been useful but hobbled. Congress must empower itself to investigate effectively under a new charter, broader than that of the Ervin committee.

It is well that in the tradition of our government impeachment is normally an unspeakable word, and it should still not be lightly bandied about. But it has inevitably been spoken, it hangs there, twisting slowly in the wind, and the air must be cleared of it, unless there is evidence sufficient to support a serious move. It is in the House of Representatives that the impeachment power is lodged, and it is there that an intensive investigative effort should be undertaken, the ground having first been prepared by providing Congress with access to the courts for enforcement of its subpoenas.

Alexander M. Bickel

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A Fresh Breeze In Poland

by Tad Szulc

Warsaw

Five years after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, designed to smash the exploding Marxist liberalism of the Dubcek regime, neighboring Poland is going through a quiet but determined evolution toward domestic political relaxation and economic improvement.

I became aware of this during an eight-day visit, my first in 35 years (having been born in Warsaw, I left at the age of 12 in 1938, but only now had I been granted a visa), and what I found among the Poles was rather unexpected and in many ways encouraging.

Unlike other Eastern European capitals, Warsaw is on the up-beat, full of life, throbbing with ideas, rich in cultural thought and activity, more optimistic than I had thought possible, and, at least in my case, full of people willing and eager to discuss everything under the sun with a remarkable sense of outspoken freedom.

To be sure Warsaw in the autumn of 1973 is nothing like the 1968 Prague spring, which I had observed at close range before and after the invasion. The Poles, who for once are more pragmatic and careful than the Czechoslovaks, are not defying the Soviet Union as Dubcek's followers had done. Instead they are concentrating on a gradual amelioration of life in all fields, including politics, within the bounds of what is possible and tolerable in a country where Soviet forces have been stationed for nearly 30 years.

The Polish phenomenon seems to me to be the most interesting development in Eastern Europe since 1968 and certainly since the winter of 1970 when bloody riots by workers in northern Poland forced the ouster of Wladyslaw Gomulka, the aging hardliner, from the leadership of the Communist Party and put in power Edward Gierek, the pragmatic technocrat who believes in modernizing and relaxing his society. Probably the most accurate comment is that Gierek and his people have been able to strike something of a compromise with the Polish society, which remains essentially non-Communist in its outlook. This is an achievement that, with the possible exception of Hungary, no other Communist regime can claim. Yugoslavia, of course, is a special and separate case. What exists in Poland then is a tacit agreement between the regime and the people to coexist under complex unwritten rules that nobody proposes to violate at this time. The freedom enjoyed by the Roman Catholic church, a major power in Poland, is part of this tacit accord, the regime not allowing itself to overreact when the church keeps pushing for greater political freedoms, as it does frequently in sermons preached from pulpits in regularly crowded places of worship.

In another dimension Poland is discreetly emerging as a relatively (*relative* is the key qualification in discussing every aspect of Polish affairs) autonomous voice in foreign policy within the Warsaw Pact alliance, although for obvious reasons the Poles cannot openly stray too far from Moscow's fundamental policies. If nothing else Polish society is infinitely better informed about the West and the outside world as a whole than other European Communist societies, and this is immediately apparent in all Warsaw conversations. Poland's perceptions of the international scene are sharper, more flexible and sophisticated, and this has some impact on Eastern European Communist thinking insofar as the Poles find ways of circulating their views.

Speaking privately senior government officials describe Poland, perhaps with some exaggeration, as the eastern counterpart of France in the European system of alliances. This is especially true of the Polish concern, (heard also in Paris) that détente may lead to the reunification of Germany. Poland is solidly in favor of the US-Soviet détente (Poland hopes it will be a guarantee of Soviet moderation and it needs détente to go on expanding vital economic relations with the West), and those in the know in Warsaw derive muted satisfaction from the unpublicized fact that Brezhnev sought Polish support—he also sought it in a few other East European capitals—for his own détente policies during the Soviet Politburo's crisis last April. This apparently was the first time a Soviet leader turned for political support to nations once dismissed as Moscow's pliant satellites. My Warsaw talks were held, however, just before the eruption of the Arab-Israeli war.

Gierek and his Politburo (with one exception in its membership) are what is known as "postwar" people, Communist leaders who matured after World War II and whose credentials are not derived from struggles in the prewar Communist underground or from wartime residence in Moscow. Gierek and his

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men must prove themselves on their merits as leaders and modern administrators. Unlike their predecessors they can no longer live on old Communist myths. This is understood by Gierek, as it is by public opinion, which does exist both inside and outside the Communist Party as was demonstrated by the events of 1970. The 60-year-old Gierek, who comes from industrialized western Poland and spent many years in France (he was 26 when the war broke out), definitely belongs to the postwar world. During his three years in power he has done away with most of the Polish Stalinists in the national hierarchy. He has also quietly buried the "Partisan" legend that until recently was the mainstay of the hardline faction controlled by former Politburo member Mieczyslaw Moczar, a wartime underground commander and later interior minister and secret police chief. Like Gomulka, Moczar is now a nonperson, quietly living out his years in oblivion. It is symptomatic that Poland's widely popular new movie is *Hubal*, the story of a Polish soldier who after the 1939 Nazi victory refused to shed his uniform and went on fighting alone in the forests instead of going underground with the partisans.

Writers who had long been banned from public print are again permitted to publish, although under the unwritten rules they are expected to exercise some self-restraint. A case in point is the 78-year-old poet and essayist Antoni Slonimski, one of the country's most famous non-Communist intellectuals, who voluntarily returned from exile in London in the early 1950s. Slonimski, who was not allowed to publish in the periodical press for a number of years, was given permission, when I visited Warsaw, to start publishing his rather witty memoirs in the weekly magazine *Polityka*. It was the talk of the town when the first installment appeared and the magazine's issue sold out quickly. New plays in Warsaw's highly active theaters are increasingly outspoken about politics—Polish audiences are masters at listening between the lines—and they are performed before full houses.

Another interesting new development is the growing impatience among younger Communist intellectuals and technocrats with the encumbrances imposed on their work by the traditional party bureaucracy that Gierek has not yet been able to modernize. There is a great deal of private complaining about the duplication in functions carried out by the party's Central Committee and government ministries charged with specific responsibilities. The consensus is that the party apparatus tends to get in the way of progress, and there is a lot of quiet discussion about how this problem should be resolved. The question of the relationship between the party and the state is expected to come up when the new administrative reform, decentralizing power through the return to the traditional system of voivodeships (provinces) and counties, is completed. This month Gierek let it be known that he planned to purge the party of "unwanted members."

Unquestionably Gierek's most serious problems are economic and social. Although salaries were raised after the 1970 riots family incomes in the cities are still far out of phase with prices. There is no visible poverty or even shabbiness in the streets of Warsaw or Kraków, but obviously a great effort is made by the population to keep up appearances. People struggle to make ends meet and the consumer hunger in the cities is deepening. There is a privileged class—and not only of party or government bigwigs—who drive cars selling at 25 times the average monthly salary of a middle-level bureaucrat and who fill restaurants where a meal for two (with vodka or beer) costs the equivalent of nearly 10 percent of the salary. It is one of the Polish mysteries how they manage it. In the huge department stores men crowd around racks of expensive ready-made suits and coats of fairly low quality, and women finger dresses they wish they could afford. Food is not cheap but it is plentiful and nobody seems deprived. The official promise—and hope—is that the next five-year plan, starting in 1975, will be something of a breakthrough. In a speech this month Gierek promised that national purchasing power would rise by five percent in the next two years.

Where things are quite backward is the Polish countryside—the home of 47 percent of the population. Fields are still worked by teams of horses and men (or women) and tractors are a rarity. Except for Western Poland the villages do not seem to have changed much in the postwar era, what with the old airless shacks and pigs and geese darting about. The countryside remains the great national priority, but it will take more than another five-year plan to bring it up to Western European standards.

The détente and the advent of the new generation in the national leadership bring Poland increasingly closer to the West (her historic orientation) and inevitably subject her to new tastes and ideas.

Travel by Poles to the West is no longer uncommon (the problem is for the traveler to obtain enough foreign currency), and the flow of visitors from Western Europe and the US grows daily. It is hard to get a seat on the big jets flying four times a week between Warsaw and New York (Pan American and Polish Airlines LOT split the service), and planes to and from London, Paris or West German cities are always full. Hotel rooms in Warsaw are booked for months ahead for visiting businessmen, trade missions, cultural groups and ordinary tourists—a great many of them Americans of Polish descent. Unlike in Moscow and most Eastern European capitals, contact between foreigners and the local population is easy and casual. The secret police must be observing, I imagine, all these goings-on, but no Pole I know seems to be concerned about it;

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I never saw people furtively looking over their shoulders when talking to foreigners in public. Likewise I found no reluctance on the part of Poles I know to receive me in their homes and to discuss any subject I cared to bring up. Nobody lowers his voice even when sensitive subjects come up, whether at private homes or restaurants. Those who are interested in politics make no bones about listening regularly to the BBC, Radio Free Europe or the Voice of America.

The question of anti-Semitism is no longer taboo—largely because the present regime is not practicing it. The fact that there are only 10,000 Jews in Poland in a population of 33 million (there were three million before the war) has, of course, done away with what used to be called the Jewish problem. Even anti-Communist intellectuals now claim that the postwar anti-Semitism was artificially inspired by past regimes, most notably by Gomulka in March 1968, when he faced a domestic rebellion and needed scapegoats. There was a flurry of resentment when the present government refused for a while an exit permit for Leopold Trepper, a Jew who ran an anti-Nazi espionage net during the war, but this problem now appears to have been resolved. Although Poland broke diplomatic relations with Israel during the 1967 war, following the Soviet example, public sympathies are with the Israelis and there is no effort to hide it.

The Poles realize that a breakdown in the US-Soviet détente may force a new period of rigidity if the Russians decide that their western flank is overexposed. This realization tempers present optimism. But the evolutionary process has increasing momentum; it may be hard for Brezhnev, Gierek or anybody to reverse it altogether. This, too, the Poles know.

The Middle East

From Truce to Peace?

by Stanley Karnow

The cease-fire in the Middle East, if it sticks, will appear to have been another triumph for Henry Kissinger's peripatetic personal diplomacy. For unlike the 1967 blitzkrieg, which the Israelis won with decisive rapidity, the current hostilities could have dragged on interminably, bleeding the participants to the point of total exhaustion and perhaps even endangering global stability. But even though the present truce has intervened to prevent the further loss of lives—and that gain is not to be minimized—the conflict is bound to have consequences that will seriously affect both the region and the world long after the debris of battle has been cleared away. As the President's surprise alert last week of our military forces horrifyingly demonstrated, the conflict always has within it the potential of triggering universal catastrophe.

In the first place there is no reason to believe that the tenuous truce forced on the belligerents by the US and the Soviet Union will lead to a durable peace; we may now be witnessing only another interlude in a protracted struggle rather than a prelude to a genuine settlement. Moreover the eruption and escalation of the conflict itself proved that the major powers, despite the fanfare that has heralded détente, are prepared to encourage local wars that serve their purposes, and thus, as the Russians have demonstrated, they cannot always be counted on to honor agreements that seem to thwart their longer-range goals. And finally by wielding petroleum as a weapon for the first time in this crisis, the Arabs have exposed the real or imagined vulnerability of the industrial nations, and while their production cutbacks are unlikely to impose severe hardships on American consumers, the oil shortage threatens to place a strain on the relationship linking the US, Western Europe and Japan. These factors suggest that the Middle East is a far more vital arena than Vietnam ever was. As a consequence it is not going to be pacified by UN resolutions or Soviet-American accords, and its chronic volatility will continue to menace international order.

The fragility of the cease-fire is reflected in the fact that neither the Arabs nor the Israelis much wanted it and went on fighting for fully a day after publicly acceding to the truce. The Arabs reportedly kept shooting in the hope that they could retrieve lost ground and only silenced their arms under Soviet pressure;

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the Israelis, who sought to consolidate their positions on the west bank of the Suez Canal in an effort to isolate the Egyptian forces still in the Sinai, were equally reluctant to stop, but eventually acquiesced for several reasons. For one thing they could not reject a personal appeal from President Nixon, especially when it implied a possible slowdown in the delivery of US military supplies. They also feared that the Soviet Union might increase its support of Egypt to include such equipment as MIG-25 jet fighter aircraft, some of which, presumably flown by Russian pilots, have already been sighted over the area. In addition the Israelis apparently estimated that they had attained a battlefield position that was favorable enough to permit them to bargain, rather than risk higher casualties than the heavy losses in manpower and material they had sustained until then. Hence they accepted the truce with reservations, perceiving it to be a short-term contrivance that would lead either to substantive negotiations or a resumption of hostilities.

In New York, meanwhile, the big powers displayed remarkable cohesion at the UN Security Council. Even the Chinese, who are rhetorically committed to the most radical elements among the Palestinian guerrillas, went along by abstaining rather than vetoing the cease-fire motion, and their contribution as well as Soviet cooperation can be credited to Kissinger's persuasive talents. But the basic flaw in the UN motion is an old one: the Arabs and Israelis are asked to implement Security Council Resolution 242, which was passed after the 1967 war and whose ambiguity lies at the root of the latest conflict. The resolution specifically called on the Israelis to withdraw from the sectors they occupied during the 1967 hostilities; that, the Arabs have claimed, means that their enemies should have long ago pulled out of the Sinai, Sharm el Sheik, the Golan Heights, the west bank of the Jordan and other areas. The Israelis have replied that the resolution guarantees them "secure" boundaries, and their contention has been that their safety depends on control of the controversial zones. Various proposals advanced within recent years have aimed to reach a compromise on the territorial issue, but none has made much headway. Nor is there any indication, as Israeli Premier Golda Meir disclosed last week, that either the US or the Soviet Union has a peace plan beyond the possible formation of teams to supervise the truce. So we're back to square one: negotiations on a political settlement will necessarily involve the Arabs and Israelis in direct confrontation, and only the wildest optimist would predict that their chances of reconciliation are good. Unless they undergo a drastic change of mind, the Israelis can be expected to equate territory with security, and they can back up their equation with the fact that they have an advantage on the ground. The Arabs, for their part, have emerged from the war with more self-confidence that is apt to be translated into greater firmness at the conference table.

The new UN resolution further asserts that negotiations between the Arabs and Israelis ought to begin "under appropriate auspices," which signifies that the US and the Soviet Union will lend their "good offices" to the endeavor. But judging from their conduct during this conflict, the Russians may not be unreservedly dedicated to reducing tensions in the Middle East. Plainly violating his summit meeting pledges to President Nixon to work together for peace, Soviet Communist Party leader Leonid Brezhnev exhorted the Arab states to join Egypt and Syria in the struggle against Israel, meanwhile fueling the war by giving their clients sophisticated weapons ranging from SAM-6 surface-to-air missiles to T-62 tanks. According to the Institute for Strategic Studies in London, the Soviet leaders also sent more than 5000 military advisers and instructors into Egypt, Syria and Iraq, and among other foreign figures reportedly engaged are North Korean pilots flying for the Egyptians and North Vietnamese missile experts helping the Syrians. And the Russians have not been alone in assisting the Arabs. The French have sold 60 Mirage V interceptors to Libya, which has five pilots, and 14 identical airplanes to the tiny sheikdom of Abu Dhabi, which has no pilots, and the presumption is that some of these craft have or will be transferred to other Arab states more directly engaged in combat. In contrast President Nixon's program to replenish Israel's arsenal with more than $2 billion worth of equipment includes only a handful of US technical personnel, and the program itself is primarily calculated to restore the military balance in the region rather than to assure superiority to the Israelis. The administration refrained from extending maximum support to the Israelis, first by not aiding them immediately after the war broke out and later by putting pressure on them to accept a cease-fire before they had fulfilled their objectives in the Suez canal sector. In the latter instance, US officials explain, the administration was anxious to avert a humiliation of the Arabs that would make a compromise settlement difficult.

In light of Soviet conduct it seems to me that there is a certain validity in the skepticism being shown in several quarters about the Nixon administration's rapprochement with Moscow, and particularly with White House claims that the President has built a new "structure of peace." To be sure, as the results of the emergency UN session make clear, Kissinger was able to mobilize the Russians and Chinese to back a truce, and that was a feat. But the Russians behaved with similar prudence before the days of détente. They did nothing in 1958, when US troops landed in Lebanon, and they reacted cautiously during the 1967 war and again during the Jordan crisis of 1970. This time, by shipping the latest weapons to the Arabs in extravagant quantities, they did more to spur renewed war in the Middle East than ever before, and though they

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showed no intention of getting into the fighting themselves, they widened considerably the gap between their promises to contribute to peace and their actual performance. In short there is little comfort in the somewhat convoluted contention that the Russians could have behaved worse than they did. Détente has suffered, and however the Middle East situation evolves it will be increasingly harder for the administration to fend off critics like Senator Henry Jackson, who thinks that the Kissinger policy will end up with the Kremlin holding the edge. The general tone elsewhere in Congress has also grown hawkish: both the Senate and the House have restored most of the funds earlier sliced from the Pentagon's budget. And senior US soldiers have also begun to voice doubts openly about the administration's strategy toward the Soviet Union. The other day, reflecting the views of the joint chiefs, Army Chief of Staff General Creighton Abrams warned that "the word 'détente' . . . for some people evidently colors everything rose and turns their perceptions away from even obvious threats." Détente, he added, is a perception rather than an "objective fact," and it can change "as quickly as perceptions change." By the middle of the week, amid reports of Soviet troop deployments and Mr. Nixon's alert of US forces, even Kissinger seemed doubtful about détente. Regarding its status he said, "we can make a better judgment when we know if peace has taken hold."

If the credibility of détente has lost its luster, the US also appears to have lost a measure of sympathy in Western Europe and Japan as a consequence of the Middle East crisis, and this stems largely from the administration's failure to appreciate that the Arabs would really use oil as a political bludgeon. Early last month Mr. Nixon publicly downgraded the blackmail power of petroleum with the comment that the Arab producers could not survive without markets and would therefore exercise restraint. That remark overlooked the extent to which conservative leaders like King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, which has the world's biggest oil resources, have become political activists in order to keep ahead of the Arab radicals; they could not stay neutral in the event of a war with Israel. Mr. Nixon also ignored the fact that unlike the US, which relies on the Middle East for only about five percent of its oil, the West Europeans get 30 percent of their petroleum from the region and the Japanese nearly 90 percent; it is they who would be hardest hit by Arab reprisals.

After the war broke out the reprisals came in two forms. On the one hand 11 Arab states cut back production by five percent and Saudi Arabia reduced its output by 10 percent, warning that these curbs would increase "until an Israeli withdrawal is completed and until the legal restoration of the legal rights of the Palestinian people." At the same time the six Persian Gulf producers belonging to the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries voted to raise the posted price of oil by 70 percent. The White House initially planned to send a high-level official delegation to Saudi Arabia to placate Faisal, but later abandoned the scheme after deciding that it would offend the Israelis without appeasing the Arabs. The House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved a bill requiring the administration to extend its present controls on heating oil and propane to crude oil, gasoline and industrial petroleum. Elsewhere in the world, however, the potential combination of oil shortages and high prices had a far stronger impact.

Japan, which maintains enough crude and refined oil to keep it going for about 60 days and normally counts on another 20-day supply enroute by sea, was stunned by the prospect of its industries grinding to a standstill and its already critical inflation leaping to astronomic proportions. The British, who import most of their oil from the Persian Gulf and Libya, anticipate sharp increases in gasoline prices and rationing by the end of the year. Italy banned exports of kerosene and gasoline; Belgium and the Netherlands announced special licensing arrangements for petroleum shipments; Austria, Sweden, Spain and Luxembourg moved in the direction of controls. The upshot of all this has been a perceptible stress in the ties between the US and its Atlantic and Japanese allies. Much of the displeasure with the US hinges on the conviction that Europe and Japan are being penalized for American support of Israel. At this stage the reactions are mostly verbal. They range from the complaint that the US is sending Israel military equipment originally destined for members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to the prediction that Congress, disappointed by the European lack of enthusiasm for the Israelis, will accelerate the unilateral withdrawal of American troops from the continent. But some NATO countries went further than talk, and barred US aircraft bound for Israel from landing on or flying over their territory. The possibility also looms that plans for Western and Japanese cooperation to assure minimum oil needs for all will be scrapped as different nations scramble for petroleum supplies. Such a development, already evident before the war in feverish bidding by Japanese and European groups for special concessions and contracts in the Middle East, could degenerate into a political melee.

The Middle East, then, is crucial for reasons that reach way beyond the region itself, and it will remain a danger zone for the entire world as long as the cease-fire is not transformed into a negotiated peace. At the moment a settlement between the Arabs and Israelis seems remote. And if the Russians were indeed to intervene militarily, and unilaterally, as Secretary Kissinger seemed momentarily last week to fear they might, not just the settlement but the peace of the world would suddenly be put in fearful jeopardy.

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Stanley Kauffmann on films

The Long Goodbye
(United Artists)

Ozu and Others

There's nothing wrong with Robert Altman that a little regression won't cure. I liked his early film *M*A*S*H* and increasingly disliked the ones that followed, *Brewster McCloud, McCabe and Mrs. Miller* and *Images*. It's a pleasure—unexpected—to report that his new film is a pleasure. Evidently Altman has just been miscasting himself; he is neither a whimsical fantasist nor a poetic reviser of myths nor a prober of the psyche. He is, as he showed in his army film, a satirical comedian, and he just needed to go back to that early style. *The Long Goodbye*, made from a Raymond Chandler novel, is a good private-eye picture, but it's also a good satire on private eyes and their pictures.

The distributors have been nervous about the film, I hear—release was delayed while worrying went on. I would guess that the only real cause for worry was two names: Chandler's and his detective's Philip Marlowe. Altman had chosen to do his spoofery with a famous hardboiled novelist whose private eye had been played by Humphrey Bogart, no less. (And also by Dick Powell and George Montgomery, who were much less.) Without the burden of those names, the picture would have caused no sweat because in itself it's a generally amusing piece of bite-size cynicism.

The setting is Hollywood, mostly, replete with fungoid lushness, outside and in. Marlowe is played by Elliott Gould (who was in *M*A*S*H*) as the opposite of Bogart. He slumps and slurps and slobbles along, usually unshaven, frequently cigaretted, making a distinct effort to seem well off the ball while, under his fog, he's well on it. The key is still anti-heroism, as with Bogart, but Bogart's tenor was consciously and competently anti-heroic. It's only retrospectively that we see Gould has been thinking-thinking-thinking the whole time under his muzziness, and it's a continual comic surprise that, in the tightest of spots, he is never frightened.

The novel has been updated in the screenplay by Leigh Brackett, who was co-author—with William Faulkner and Jules Furthman—of the Bogart film made from Chandler's *The Big Sleep* in 1946. A nice touch of sentiment, if that's the right word in Chandler context, to use Brackett here. Now there's plentiful profanity and the multiracial casting of cops and hoods. (The chief hood, a sly little brute, wears the Star of David around his neck. There's progress for you.) And the whole story is wrapped in mod-poppery. For instance four girls live in an apartment across from Marlowe and spend most of their time on their terrace, stoned on hash, doing yoga and other exercises. They are always seen only in passing, just bare-breasted décor.

The story holds because the crimes and consequences are credible (except for one sequence in which Marlowe chases a car on foot), because the developments keep developing, and because it's peopled with just the sort of superficially vivid characters one wants in a private-eye film. Sterling Hayden, the mad general of *Dr. Strangelove*, gives a somewhat better performance than is called for as a bearded author with writer's block, going out of his mind with drink and blustery fear. His wife is played by Nina van Pallandt, the Danish pastry of the Clifford Irving affair. Her frankly fortyish beauty, her poise and intelligence, and her quite respectable acting ability take her far out of the scandal-exploitation league. Irving's wind has blown some good.

Altman's hand wobbles a bit. He commits the thoughtlessness of having the camera linger with two other characters when the hero leaves, in a one-man's-vision pitture. He leans hard on the use of animals throughout—a cat and numerous dogs—as if to give film students a Theme to write about. He quotes from other films with a heavy wink—an opportunely passing funeral out of *Greed*, an ending modeled on *The Third Man*. And he closes with a '30s tune, "Hooray for Hollywood," which he also used for openers, to make it ultraclear that he's saying something about movies in his movie. But the story finishes with a good snapper, keeps pretty snappy while getting there, and Gould is just right for the tone that Altman is after—it's all a joke but no less serious for that.

After extended comment on Altman, a craftsman at best, it's ironic that there isn't much to say about Yasujiro Ozu, a master. But *Late Autumn*, exquisite and not to be missed, reworks so closely some themes Ozu treated earlier that detailed criticism would largely be repetitive. (See *TNR*, March 18 and Aug. 19, '72.)

Made in color in 1960, *Late Autumn* is now released here as part of New Yorker Films' continuing effort to do some justice to Ozu in America. The setting is Tokyo once again, and the materials once again are generational conflict and matchmaking, subjects that Ozu liked because they contained just enough tension for the dramas he wanted to make out of everyday life. As Paul Schrader says in *Transcendental Style in Film* (published last year by the University of California Press): "Ozu's later cycle of family-office films (thirteen films from 1949 to 1962) features the estrangement of parents and children . . . the father-daughter conflict of *Late Spring* became the mother-daughter conflict of *Late Autumn* and reverted to a father-daughter conflict in *An Autumn Afternoon*." Since they are all performed by a relatively stable "company" of actors and are all directed in Ozu's beautifully idiosyncratic, gently controlled style, they tend to interfuse in memory. But each work is like a psalm in a book of psalms to sad, lovable, sacred life. The key work of those shown here so far is

(continued on page 32)

Films Worth Seeing

American Graffiti. George Lucas probes and fixes adolescent culture of the '60s. Often goes through cliché to quintessence.

Bang the Drum Slowly. The baseball picture for those who do and don't like baseball. Good sentiment and humor, though inconclusive.

The New Land. Jan Troell, Liv Ullmann and Max von Sydow complete the Swedish-American epic they began with *The Emigrants*. Bravo.

State of Siege. Costa-Gavras, who did Z, deals with the murder of a US official in Uruguay, 1970. Tendentious but gripping; or gripping but tendentious.

SK

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Capote's Muse is Heard

The Dogs Bark: Public People and Private Places

by Truman Capote

(Random House; $8.95)

Truman Capote derives the title for his collection of nonfiction pieces from an Arab proverb, passed along to him by a very old man wearing a black velvet Borsalino and a thick black cape and perched on a sea wall overlooking the waters off Sicily. This was almost 25 years ago and the young Capote, having just read an unfriendly treatment of his work, was complaining about the critical mind. The old man, who was André Gide, replied: "Ah, well. 'The dogs bark, but the caravan moves on.' "

In those strange periods when I am working hard; strange only because they seem so remote and muted with the passing of time, as one lives certain moments with little recollection at all of the tangible things transpiring around him, my own relationship with the writing of others is very eccentric. I believe a few other writers will confirm this in themselves. Often it becomes a matter of reading something or another that will put you painlessly to sleep. One learns in such periods to beware of the dead masters—Balzac, say, or Proust, or Hawthorne (not to mention Faulkner, who lived much too close up the road in Lafayette County)—as well as the most distinctive of one's countrymen who are contemporaries. Both are a little treacherous: the former because they may intimidate the imagination rather than prod it, and fill you with sadness for what they understood, the latter because in those common threads that bind us together there lies a subtle coercion to jostle all over again for a foot of the Lord's earth. In such lonesome moods you have to remind yourself that there is room for us all.

Capote's work, his fiction and otherwise, has always been an affirmation for me, for he too is a planet wanderer, a frequenter of places of doom, pain and mayhem, haunted by animals, by his own childhood, and by landscapes long put aside, a being who believes the most hopeful and dangerous word in the language is love—and for that matter a Southerner from dark states abutting on the Gulf. All the pieces in his latest volume have appeared at one time or another over the last three decades. They have touched me, reminding me of the things I most cherish and fear and need to remember, things having to do with the nature of the calling.

The other day, for the first time since it came out seven years ago, I reread *In Cold Blood*. It is a work of suffering and it must have exacted its cost in flesh. I was an editor in New York at the time of its publication and hence peremptorily attuned to such things. I recall a few of the feverish denunciations that accompanied it, although I could not remember the names of any of the reviewers, nor do I think it won any prizes. I discovered myself immersed again in a work of tremendous strength, a narrative shaped on its surface by reportage but in truth an expression of a literary sensibility of the highest order, a book that the "new journalism" has now taken to its embattlements but that is somewhat closer to Dickens or Flaubert, if one wants to know it, than to *New York* magazine. This time it was not the full movement and complexity of the *montage* that affected me, but the smallest nuances done with such precision: the old man and the child collecting empty bottles by the roadside, the dead rustlings of the Kansas wheatfields, Nancy Clutter's boyfriend alone at the Clutter house three months afterward, seeing on the grass the tracks of the ambulance tires, the detective Dewey's chance meeting with Nancy's best friend several years later at Nancy's grave. The wholeness of places, even the most brittle and forlorn, rivets itself into the mind.

Places. Here, from this new collection, is New Orleans, written in 1946:

> New Orleans streets have long, lonesome perspectives; in empty hours . . . things innocent ordinarily (a face behind the slanted light of shutters, nuns moving in the distance, a fat arm lolling lopsidedly out some window, a lonely black boy squatting in an alley, blowing soap bubbles and watching sadly as they slowly rise to burst), acquire qualities of violence.

And Hollywood, also in 1946, still true for another small-town American boy who has just made his first pilgrimage there:

> There is an air of Sunday vacancy; here where no one walks cars glide in a constant silent stream, my shadow, moving down the stark white street, is like the one living element in a Chirico. It is not the comfortable silence felt in small American towns, though the physical atmosphere of stoops and yards and hedges is very often the same; the difference is that in real towns you can be pretty sure what sorts of people there are hiding beyond those numbered doors, but here, where all seems transient, ephemeral, there is no general pattern to the population, and nothing is intended—this street, that house, mushrooms of accident, and a crack in the wall, only strike an ugly note prophesying doom.

In "The Muses Are Heard," the longest and best-known item in the collection, the writer has just turned a corner near St. Isaac's Cathedral in Leningrad:

> I came upon a scene that made the flow of numbers stop like the hands of a dropped watch. It was this: four men in black had a fifth backed against the cathedral wall. They were pounding him with the full weight of their bodies, like football players practicing on a dummy. A woman, respectably dressed and carrying a pocketbook tucked under her arm, stood on the sidelines as though she were casually waiting while some men friends finished a business conversation. Except for the cawing of crows, it was like an episode from a silent film; no one made a sound, and as the four attackers relinquished the man, leaving him spread-eagled on the snow, they glanced at me indifferently, joined the woman and walked off without a word between them.

An American in Europe, 1948—an English artist having said to him: " 'How wonderful it must be for an American travelling in Europe the first time; you can never be a part of it, so none of the pain is yours, you will never

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have to endure it—yes, for you there is only the beauty,' " he writes:

> Not understanding what he meant, I resented this; but later, after some months in France and Italy, I saw that he was right: I was not a part of Europe, I never would be. Safe, I could leave when I wanted to, and for me there was only the honeyed, hallowed air of beauty. But it was not so wonderful as the young man had imagined; it was desperate to feel that one could never be a part of a moment so moving, that always one would be isolated from this landscape and these people; and then gradually I realized I did not have to be a part of it; rather it could be a part of me.

It is this attention to style, to the extraordinary pull of places, to all the fleeting wisps of the past that give this volume a durability far beyond the perfunctory compendia of pieces with which publishers stay in the graces of their good writers when those writers are between big books. From "The Muses Are Heard" about the *Porgy and Bess* troupe in Russia to "Ghosts in Sunlight" about the filming of *In Cold Blood* to "The Duke in His Domain" about Marlon Brando (who felt the profile, Capote says, "a treacherous intrusion upon the secret terrain of a suffering and intellectually awesome sensibility") this is less a guidebook for the millions of aspiring journalists and city-room entrepreneurs in the land who wish to break the shackles, than a self-charting of a courageous literary life, a life of stamina, and despite the misleading public appurtenances, of course, of considerable solitude. If the "new journalism," which moves from one symposium to the next, has in fact become something more than we had bargained for (some of its exponents now belittling the act of fiction and poetry as irrelevant, obliterating in one fairly broad sweep some of the deepest impulses of the human blood), then *The Dogs Bark* is an effective answer, for while much of it does indeed stand on "reporting," it is at the core a great deal more ambitious: it is the written geography of an imaginative artist. From that geography alone it comes as a surprise to me to acknowledge that, with the possible exception of Norman Mailer, a wholly different kind of writer, Truman Capote more than any other of this generation of American writers has deliberately chosen to live his own experience in a crucible: in New York, Brooklyn, Hollywood, New Orleans and the plains of Kansas—Haiti, Tangier, Spain, Greece and Sicily; with Bogie, Mae West, Isak Dineson, Adlai Stevenson and the Satchmo; among convicted murderers, blacks on display and the big American rich.

The diminutive wizard with the savage tongue does not delude me. There is too large a place in his heart for birds who think they are dogs, for old women who really are children, and for children who frame their hands to see and understand clouds. The unbearable emotion is disciplined, but only barely; the feel for the word is his strength and salvation. The solitary guest on yachts in the Aegean, the wicked *bon vivant* who conducts gossip in Southampton mansions as surely as fine iron filings are drawn to a magnet, who tells the monthlies his arcane formulas for making best-sellers, knows too much about death cells, old-age homes, farmhouses in Alabama and those European places where crones come with breadcrumbs at sunset to feed stray cats. Beneath the conversational veneer now familiar to every night talk-show I sense the lonely boy of "A Christmas Memory," a writer of splendid generosity, rooted in his own day yet obsessed forever with mortality and destruction, as fragile as ancient glassware. *The Dogs Bark* quietly suggests again that Capote is among our best, and surely the one who most defies a category.

Willie Morris

Henry Wallace as Seer

The Price of Vision
The Diary of Henry A. Wallace 1942-1946
edited and with an introduction by John Morton Blum
(Houghton Mifflin; $15)

The Rise and Fall of the People's Century
Henry Agard Wallace and American Liberalism, 1941-1948
by Norman Markowitz
(The Free Press; $8.95)

I approach this subject somewhat gingerly. Wallace *was*, briefly, the nominal editor of this journal from fall 1946 when President Truman fired him as secretary of Commerce for speaking against Truman's foreign policy, until winter 1948 when he became the presidential candidate of the new Progressive Party. He was also a friend, a tennis partner in the early '50s on summer Sundays at a neighbor's court. After the games we sat around with our hosts for hours talking politics. Henry never contributed a word. Just silence. Not even brooding. He looked serene. He had less small talk than anyone I've known.

Henry Wallace was a leading figure in public life from 1933 to 1948, and before that in rural life, as editor of *Wallaces' Farmer*, an influential and profitable magazine founded by his grandfather, edited by his father who became secretary of Agriculture under President Harding in the '20s, and edited by himself until *he* became secretary of Agriculture under President Franklin Roosevelt. He became Roosevelt's Vice President in 1940, was dumped in 1944, became secretary of Commerce, continued in that post after Roosevelt died and Truman became President, lasted longer than any of the New Deal Cabinet, was fired by Truman in 1946, ran (disastrously) for President on a third-party ticket in 1948, retreated to a farm (and tennis courts) in South Salem, New York, grew a hybrid strain of corn that

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made him rich, and died in 1965. The diaries cover only four years of this crowded life, although the editor, John Morton Blum, Woodward professor of history at Yale, provides as introduction a good 50-page "Portrait of the Diarist" which summarizes his career. The Markowitz book includes the last seven years of Wallace's public life, but we will have to wait until after 1975, when the Wallace diaries will be opened to other scholars, for a full life-and-times.

Meanwhile these two books give useful glimpses of, and occasional insights into, the hugger-mugger of American politics as practiced or malpracticed by a man who didn't have much taste for it (FDR once said, "Henry Wallace is not, never has been, and never will be a politician"). Blum does not explain his choice of title, *The Price of Vision;* but the implication is something like "nice guys finish last."

Blum is a conscientious editor. His footnotes are copious, identifying all the characters and providing the narrative setting for events that Wallace, dictating a daily entry of his own activities, didn't feel the need to provide. This is one book where it is essential for the notes to appear on the page to which they refer; and it is essential to read them, not only for historical understanding but also for pleasure. For example the diary for February 18, 1944 records Helen Gahagan's campaign for Congress in California, and the footnote, reporting her success, adds that "six years later, running for the Senate, she fell victim to the calculated, undiscriminating, and ferocious tactics of Richard M. Nixon." A bit biased, some might say; a balanced judgment, I would say. The index is meticulous, referring to events as well as to persons.

Blum admires his subject: the book is dedicated "To the Century of the Common Man," and Wallace's famous 1942 speech on that subject is printed in full as an appendix. It still makes for stirring reading and is in effect a rebuttal of Henry Luce's call for "The American Century," a notion Wallace detested, although he and Luce were on amicable social terms.

Successful farmer and editor, brilliant innovator of new policies at Agriculture, Wallace is usually misrepresented as a dreamer, a mystic and something of a crackpot. He is best known for proposing a postwar world that would produce "a quart of milk for every Hottentot a day." But he never said it, he told FDR; it was pinned on him by

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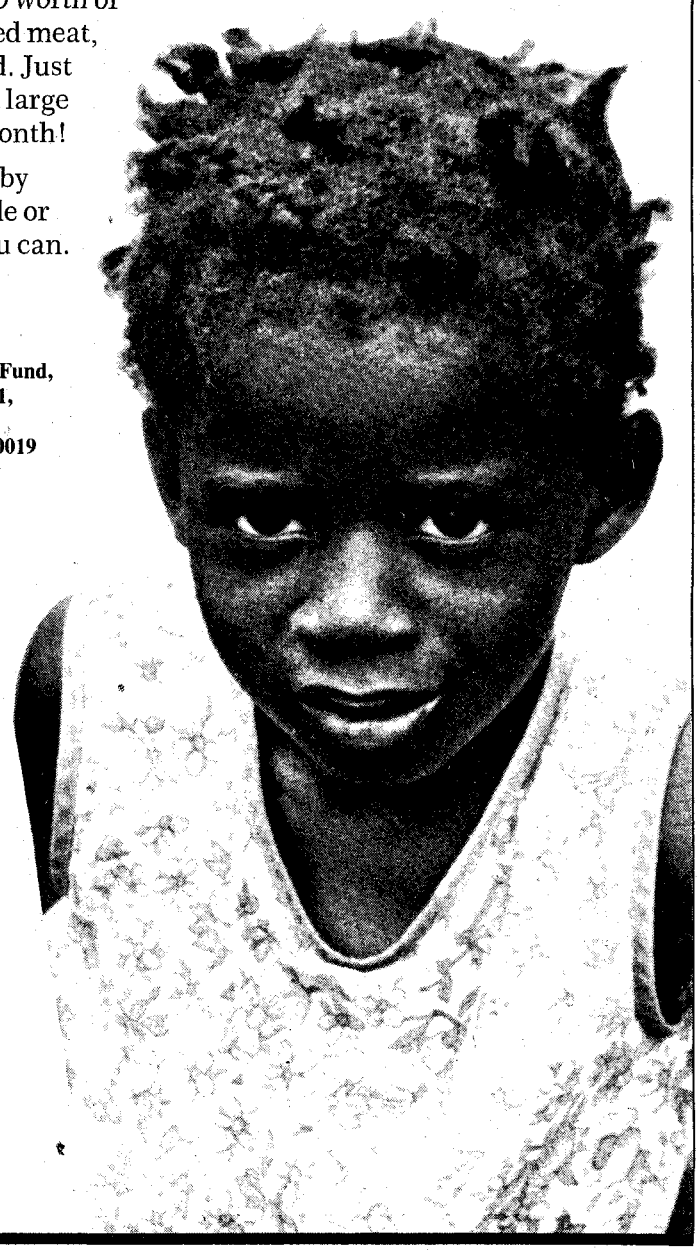

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the president of the National Association of Manufacturers. Markowitz observes, bitterly but with justification: "Thirty years ago Henry Wallace and most American social liberals committed themselves to a program their enemies called milk for Hottentots. Their opponents, the liberals of containment, accepted eventually an internationalism based on guns for Hottentots."

Wallace would not have felt more comfortable in the Kennedy or Johnson administrations than he did in Truman's. He had come to feel increasingly uncomfortable during the closing days of the Roosevelt administration, especially after the President announced at a news conference that "Dr. New Deal" had done his job and was to be replaced by "Dr. Win-the-War." Wallace watched with dismay as the old enemies of the New Deal moved into positions of power in Washington; he foresaw, long before the phrase became accepted wisdom, the emergence of the military-industrial complex. He had an important job in the war effort as head of the Bureau of Economic Warfare, charged with obtaining raw materials from the world for the American arsenal, and with denying by preemptive buying such materials from the enemy. But BEW's pursestrings were controlled by the federal lending agencies headed, as secretary of Commerce, by a tight-fisted Texas businessman, Jesse Jones (he was also sanctimonious; Truman called him "Jesus Jones"). An epic struggle for power between Wallace and Jones was decided by Roosevelt in favor of Jones. The BEW was abolished and Wallace was reduced to what Blum calls, as the title of part II of the diary, "Witness Without Portfolio." (Wallace got a portfolio back in 1945, in what must have seemed to him poetic justice: FDR fired Jones and gave Commerce to Wallace.)

Wallace was also let down on the vice presidential nomination in 1944, yet the diaries reveal little bitterness. FDR told Wallace he hoped it would be "the same team" as before and wrote a letter to the nominating convention saying that if he were a delegate he would vote for Wallace. He also wrote a letter saying he could accept other choices, particularly Harry S Truman and William O. Douglas. The city bosses got the message. They mistrusted Wallace, who made no real campaign for the nomination in any case, and after much scrambling in smoke-filled rooms the delegates settled on Truman as the least divisive choice.

Less than a year later Truman was President, a war leader surrounding himself with mediocre men, half-heartedly supporting progressive legislation and finally firing Wallace for his Madison Square Garden speech in September 1946, though he had read the advance text and approved it. (Truman denies this in his memoirs.) He may have thought it *was* a statement of "The Way to Peace" (Wallace's title for the speech; text appended to book), but Truman's secretary of State James Byrnes, then engaged in hard negotiations with the Russians, said it undermined his position. The White House cronies agreed and Wallace left.

The present edition of the diary stops there; Markowitz, a young historian who started writing a doctoral dissertation but wound up with a real book, continues the story through Wallace's editorship of *The New Republic*, his speeches around the country criticizing Truman's foreign policy but warning against a third party, his increasing encirclement by Communist or fellow-traveling advisers, and his eventual, reluctant agreement to lead a third party against his old colleague and boss. Most observers thought he would take enough votes away from Truman to elect Dewey. In the event, Wallace got little more than a million votes—fewer than Strom Thurmond, the Dixiecrat candidate—and Truman raced through the broken field to score the political upset of the century.

Markowitz concludes his study thus: "Henry Wallace, spending his final years in virtual exile at his South Salem farm, would observe the ensuing foibles and dilemmas of the cold-war liberals with faint interest, preferring instead to return to God, strawberry planting, and a celebration of the eternal verities of rural life."

What manner of man emerges from these pages? Good heart, good head most of the time, determined bureaucratic in-fighter, political innocent, capable of self-delusion, contradictory (determined to feed the world, he presided over the slaughter of six million little pigs in 1933 in an effort to drive farm prices up), unable or unwilling to face up to and resolve his contradictions (he advocated *both* free enterprise and a welfare state), often bland or naive, still shrewd: Roosevelt in 1944 was "like a man in a rowboat, . . . looking one way and rowing another." He thought Truman was "a small opportunistic man, a man of good instincts, but, therefore, probably all the more dangerous." He could be banal: after recounting an evening's discussion on Soviet affairs with Averell Harriman and Chip Bohlen he writes, "Bohlen comes from an old Philadelphia family."

My own estimate is that the prototype for Wallace in American fiction is Starbuck, the first mate in *Moby Dick*, of whom Ishmael-Melville says that he was weakened by the "incompetence of mere unaided virtue or right-mindedness."

Charles G. Bolte

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Disorder and Broken Promise

Malcolm Lowry: A Biography
by Douglas Day
(Oxford University Press; $10)

There is an informal society of Malcolm Lowry admirers for whom reading his *Under the Volcano* is in a class with the attack on Pearl Harbor: its members know exactly where and when they first read it and, once intrigued, the spell cast by the novel never seems to leave them. When it was published in 1947 very little was known publicly about the author and, in the years since, his admirers have been teased with only occasional crumbs from what one assumed was the whole loaf of his writing: Lowry himself remained a mystery.

Under the Volcano was Lowry's second novel. An earlier one, *Ultramarine*, a fictionalized account of his 17th year, had been published in 1933 in England, but when Lowry's masterwork appeared the first one was out of print and virtually unknown. Lowry himself was always apprehensive about *Ultramarine*, fearing that the critics might accuse him, perhaps rightly, of plagiarisms from Conrad Aiken or the Norwegian poet Nordahl Grieg, two writers who had exerted a strong personal influence on him. Lowry wrote to his editor, Albert Erskine, that *Ultramarine*, "which set out to be good, is an inexcusable mess of which I've been ashamed for 13 years."

In 1961 Margerie Lowry published *Hear Us O Lord From Thy Dwelling Place*, a collection of three short novels and four stories. This was followed by other posthumous collections of poems and letters as well as a novella, *Lunar Caustic*, and a novel, *October Ferry to Gabriola*, all of which his wife edited from a mass of disordered manuscripts. But there was a sadness to these scraps compared to the astonishing impact of the novel.

Now we have a biography of Malcolm Lowry that seems definitive. Douglas Day begins at the end, in the churchyard of the English village of Ripe where Malcolm Lowry is buried. Most of the villagers had no idea who their erratic resident was. Lowry died after a drunken fight with Margerie, having presumably consumed 20 sodium amytal sleeping pills with his gin. The coroner declared a verdict of "death by misadventure"; the obituaries called him "Clarence," his real first name which all of his life he had been trying to forget. Douglas Day asks "how did the author of *Under the Volcano* come to be in Ripe, and what, precisely, was the manner of his death?" Day admits that "like everything else about Lowry, the answers are complicated."

Malcolm Lowry was born in 1909 the youngest of four sons; his father was a successful cotton broker in Liverpool. The atmosphere in the Lowry household was austere. At 14 Malcolm was sent to boarding school near Cambridge. He seems to have done well in drama and music, was a stubborn sportsman, and took up the ukulele, which he played for the rest of his life. Lowry wrote lyrics for school productions and soon was writing short stories. Douglas Day explains at length that Lowry was an "oral type" with serious personality disorders, who early recognized "the lethal attraction of silence" (death). Day feels that Lowry, very early on, wrote "copiously, compulsively, in order not to die." Considering the course that Lowry's life was to follow there can be little argument that he was self-destructive, for the other major discovery Lowry made at school, besides literature and language, was alcohol. The devotion to all three became the hallmarks of his career.

At 17 Lowry sailed to the Far East as a fireman's boy on a freighter. In six months he was back in England still in love with the sea but disappointed that its hardships outweighed its romance. In 1929 he entered St. Catherine's College, Cambridge, from which he graduated without much distinction in 1932. During those years Lowry met Conrad Aiken and traveled to Cambridge, Massachusetts and Cape Cod for six months to study with him. When Aiken returned to England an arrangement was made with Malcolm's father by which Aiken, for a fee, would serve *in loco parentis* to Malcolm keeping him during holidays, tutoring him, and generally catering to what the senior Lowry felt was his son's rebellious nature. Lowry was probably happier during those years than at any other time in his life but it was he, and not Aiken, who abused and neglected the relationship as the years passed. For his part, Aiken, like so many of Lowry's friends, never seemed fully aware of Lowry's problems or temperament.

Lowry settled with his first wife in Paris. It was a stormy relationship and their separations were often transatlantic in scope. Lowry was drinking too much and not writing enough; during a reconciliation in New York he was briefly hospitalized in the psychiatric wing of Bellevue. In 1936 they sailed for Mexico. It was in Cuernevaca that Lowry began work on *Under the Volcano*.

By the end of 1937 Jan could no longer stand the disorder and broken promises of life with Malcolm and she left him for the last time. He spent that Christmas, broke and desperate, in jail. He had the appearance and mannerisms of a derelict, although he could still charm and amuse his friends when he chose as he had all his life, and was in turn indulged as though he were merely a naughty boy instead of a seriously flawed adult. Only Jan seems to have understood this and knew that, like the armadillo in *Under the Volcano*, Lowry had the ability to pull anyone who attempted to "rescue" him into the oblivion of his nightmare-tunnel.

After six months of alternately drinking and writing in Mexico Lowry's father had him legally extricated to Los Angeles and put under the care of a guardian, a financial, not a therapeutic, arrangement. After a year of working on the second draft of *Under the Volcano*, Lowry met Margerie Bonner, escaped to Canada, and they set up housekeeping in a squatter's shack in Dollarton on Vancouver's upper harbor. When Malcolm's divorce from Jan became final he and Margerie were married.

Margerie Bonner, who had been a starlet in Hollywood, was a writer who kept journals and saved all the letters and notes that she could. Convinced from the time of their first meeting that Malcolm was a "genius," she dedicated herself to nourishing his talent. The strains inherent in living with Malcolm Lowry were enormous. Margerie herself often collapsed and had to be hospitalized. The only alternative was abandonment and apparently this never seriously occurred to her.

From 1940 to 1954 Dollarton was home for the Lowrys; they spent their time writing, beachcombing, building a

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dock and, in Malcolm's case, drinking, in almost total isolation from the sophisticated worlds they had known. Douglas Day calls these Lowry's "most productive years," citing the fourth and final draft of *Under the Volcano* and the fact that Lowry was then working on novellas and stories. A great deal of correspondence also survives from these years, as well as journals, hundreds of poems and even some film scripts.

But all of this writing is disappointing. Malcolm Lowry is an example of that literary mutation who produces one good book, possibly a great book, and then cannot repeat the performance. Of enormous interest is the fact that Lowry himself was aware of his failing talent and perhaps knew better than anyone the reasons for it. Hospitalized in Haiti a few weeks before the actual publication of *Under the Volcano*, and not yet famous, he wrote in his journal: "Frankly, I have no gift for writing. I started by being a plagiarist. Then I became a hard worker, as one might say, a novelist. Now I am a drunkard again. But what I always wanted to be was a poet."

Malcolm Lowry's last three years were disastrous. His alcoholism had taken its toll and even when sober he no longer functioned normally. He tried to write, often was physically unable to feed himself or tie his shoes, fluctuated between tantrums and docility. Margerie persisted in her view of Malcolm as a "genius," believing that better times were possible and that her husband's literary output could be resumed. Fearing eviction, the Lowrys traveled from Canada to New York, to Italy. Finally after a stay in Paris they went to England. But geography was not the cause of Malcolm's problems and change of locale was not the cure. In the village of Ripe they enjoyed a few weeks of relative peace but a tragic end was inevitable. Lowry's final struggle against "the lethal attraction of silence" came on the night of July 27, 1957, a little more than 10 years after *Under the Volcano*, his masterpiece, had been published.

Like his literary works, Malcolm Lowry's life seems to have been one of constant revision, always making new starts and moving to new places, a pattern typical of alcoholic behavior. Douglas Day has chosen, either through misguided conviction or ignorance, in my view, to place a psychological interpretation on this pattern; indeed it was an interpretation that most of Lowry's friends and doctors chose to make also. Day never mentions the possibility, which the doctors and Margerie ignored as well, that if Lowry had recovered from alcoholism he might also have managed to live with his "neuroses" and to write again with brilliance. He might have become a better poet or a musician. He certainly would not have died at age 45 from gin, pills and despair.

Douglas Day's biography is filled with facts, anecdotes, photographs. It is a compelling and poignant book about Malcolm Lowry, and a welcome background to *Under the Volcano*.

Eleanor Edelstein

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

WILLIE MORRIS *is the author of* North Toward Home, Yazoo *and most recently* The Last of the Southern Girls. CHARLES BOLTE *is a writer now living in Maine.* ELEANOR EDELSTEIN *is the editor of* Addictions. IRVING MALIN *teaches at City College of New York. His most recent books are* Isaac Bashevis Singer *and* Contemporary American-Jewish Literature. J. D. O'HARA *teaches English at the University of Maryland.* WILLIAM F. CLAIRE *is editor of the poetry quarterly,* Voyages.

Supremacy of Consciousness

Eagle Eye
by Hortense Calisher

(Arbor House; $6.95)

Hortense Calisher is a shrewd observer of our social ills—displacements of youth, futilities of the rich—but she is more than a naturalist noting easy details, cataloguing crimes or sins. She is a maker of fictions; she insists upon private consciousness—even when this consciousness is extreme, obsessive and "poetic." Her new novel is a powerful indictment of social wrongs by an odd hero who may see less (or more) than he believes.

The plot of *Eagle Eye* is superficially thin. The hero is a young man who discovers that his parents—the mother is Catholic, the father Jewish—have never been happy with each other. Their family life has been a series of deceptions and thefts. Bunty—his given name is Quentin Bronstein—confronts the loss of once-durable truths and "recovers" gradually from this shock of recognition.

Calisher begins with a convenient plot, but she refuses to structure her fiction in a straightforward manner. She knows that linear plots are lies that rarely get at the heart of perception. Thus there is for her no one Vietnam, no single youth cult, no simple family. Social "realities" are as "real" as *one mind perceiving them.* Radical truth is inevitably more alarming and convincing than editorial prescriptions.

The first paragraph alerts us to the structure and theme (and, yes, "plot") of the novel: "Did weather exist when nobody looked at it? Did it know? At dawn, say, on a summer Sunday in the financial district, in a suite on the forty-first floor? Whose only occupants were the owner minimally sleeping in his windowless private eyrie at the center of it, and his son here in the outer office lying naked and face down on a rug in front of a computer panel, not yet cracking an eye." These details are carefully chosen to suggest a dreamlike setting in which things are out of focus (or dazzlingly clear?). There is strangeness. When we read that "weather" may not exist unless someone looks at it, we recognize the urgency of private eyes, of inner perceptions and weathers. And the entire novel deals with this "given"—can Bunty ever marry his vision and routine details? Can he *conform?*

Look more closely at the quoted sentences. The setting is the financial district (of New York), but the district is viewed as unusual—the time is Sunday; the office is empty except for two sleepers. (We think of Melville's Bartleby.)

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There are references to eyes, visions, "windows." These references, along with the title of the novel, assert the supremacy of consciousness.

But the consciousness here seems "free-floating." Who is thinking? Who is shrewdly noting (and shaping) details? We don't know. Later we read about Bunty in the third person: "his own eyes saw so much of late there must be something wrong with them." He is the center of consciousness, but he sees so clearly that he is *blinded*.

As the novel "progresses"—the progress is spirit-bound, not time-bound—Bunty refers to himself in the first person. Third and first persons increasingly symbolize his divisions, his conflicts between family (super-ego?) and self. He finds it more and more difficult to reconcile the two, although he is on the surface as "hip" as his contemporaries. (Indeed his hipness hides a powerful, tic-ridden awareness.)

Bunty is drawn to heights. He would like to be above his parents' strife-filled world. He hopes for a kind of magic divinity. He longs to soar like an eagle, scrutinizing the patterns below him. He is an Icarus—the mythic element is continually suggested—and the higher he tries to go, the more removed he is from economic and social designs.

But, like the coins mentioned throughout the novel, Bunty is two-sided. He secretly wants to *fall away* from his family ties, his startling perceptions and his humanity. He, like many of his contemporaries, yearns to drop out—to die. At one point he informs us: "I think the flesh of apartment dwellers never really forgets at what height it lives. Or not the child who is bred to it, warned when near windows, or grabbed away from them before language, his sight grilled with curlicued iron, or soft stone balustrade or glass, or nothing but nothing—between him and the people moving urgently down below. Down there is the empire. The eye is always making the magic, forbidden leap."

Calisher stuns us with the "magic, forbidden leaps" of her imagination. She forces us to enter—and withdraw from—her narrator's mind; she offers few clues to his ultimate condition. But by testing us with her sharp vision she emerges here as a true creator—an eagle of fiction-makers.

Irving Malin

Coming

Reviews of Vidal's Burr *and Mary Daly's* Beyond God the Father

Man of Property

Balzac
by V. S. Pritchett
(Knopf; $15)

Balzac's novels contain a world of passion, debt and upward mobility, a world centered on characters who are comically or pathetically wall-eyed, one eye on the main chance, another on a star. They dream of Napoleonic victories won by love or money, of material gains achieved suddenly and magically, of practical success attained through diligent absurdities. It is a world Balzac knew well, as V. S. Pritchett demonstrates.

Honoré de Balzac didn't deserve the aristocratic "de," nor the title of Marquis d'Entragues under which he traveled when in funds. But he assumed them, together with his many mistresses—almost invariably high-class married women with children—his elegant houses and fancy clothes bought on credit and seldom paid for. Balzac was an intensely acquisitive man, gathering money, experience, knowledge, stories, people, ideas and financial ruin with indiscriminate voraciousness. He was also an incredibly prolific author, producing a *comédie humaine* of some 100 novels and novellas, besides a small library of stories, plays, pamphlets and potboilers issued under *noms de plume*.

Balzac was born in 1799 into a microcosm of that comedy he later explored. His father, born a peasant, had pushed his way up to literacy, government officialdom and the bourgeoisie, and had married a girl 32 years younger but just as ambitious and obsessed with money. Mme Balzac's ambition led her briefly to a young gentleman and militia officer; Balzac's father made no fuss. "Because of his age," Mme Balzac told her children, "your father had the tact to say nothing." Balzac's two sisters married unhappily but upward, and his own fondness for married women was notorious; as V. S. Pritchett sums the matter up, "if there was one thing the . . . Balzac family knew all about it was domestic love."

At 19 Balzac persuaded his parents to underwrite two years of poverty while he became a famous writer in Paris. (His embarrassed family told the neighbors he was visiting distant relatives.) He was already what Keats called a "camelion Poet"; describing a family followed in the street, he wrote: "I could feel their rags on my shoulders, I walked in their worn-out shoes. I was with them against the managers of their factory and with them when they were tricked out of their pay. I left myself to become them." But after two years what he brought back from the garret was an elegant verse tragedy about Oliver Cromwell. Even his family thought it a disaster, but disasters were always to stimulate Balzac. He had failed at the summit; he turned to the gutters. His sister claimed that in the next few years he wrote 40 novelettes, trashy tales of gothic fantasy, melodrama, psychological aberration and sexual innuendo. For extra money he took the job of tutoring the children of an aristocratic family, the Bernys. Mme de Berny had been raised at the court of Versailles; Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette had been her godparents. Balzac was enchanted. Soon he wrote her that she was "more than a friend, more than a sister, almost a mother but still more than all this: a kind of visible divinity . . ." She laughed, she dissuaded, she grew angry; she forgave, she dabbled, she fell. He was 23, she 45. The affair lasted for 20 years.

With money from his parents and his mistress he set up as a publisher, failed, and then turned to novel writing. Pritchett takes this as a decisive moment: henceforth Balzac was to have an extensive knowledge of business and business law, a feeling for the importance of success, great pressure to write, a taste for disguises, evasions and illusory schemes for instant wealth. Also he now had a double standard: a strong attachment to material and social success coupled with the detachment of the outsider, resulting in a clear-eyed monomania. Exuberantly indebted, he rented a house and furnished it in luxury; acquired the necessary duchess, this time a leftover from Napoleon's court; and he set to work in earnest on those novels he was to collect into his

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human comedy.

He became comically famous himself. His obsession with older women pervaded his stories; "the joke that went round Paris was that a clever new writer of light novelettes had extended the age of love for women by ten years." A living caricature of himself—he was 5 feet 2 inches tall, with very short legs, an enormous belly, missing front teeth, terrible table manners and bad taste in clothes—he had nevertheless a Byronic success with women. They included Evalina Hanska, the 32-year-old wife of a wealthy Polish count. She became his *idée fixe*. He pursued her, largely through letters, during a harried decade of waiting for her count to die, then during six more years of dillydallying on her part, until at last, during the political uprisings of 1848, she invited him to her huge estate in the Ukraine. He was 49 and ill; he had a heart attack on arrival and another later. Understandably Mme Hanska hesitated, nursing her arthritis and gout. Finally the czar gave his permission and Mme Hanska gave in. After honeymoon months on the road they reached the Parisian love nest Balzac's execrable taste had prepared. The door was locked. When they finally broke in, they found his manservant insane and wreckage everywhere. It was an emblem. Balzac's dazzlingly successful marriage proved the end of him; five months after his wedding he was dead in his gaudy house on the rue Fortunée.

V. S. Pritchett tells Balzac's story so that the novels are slighted, the finances and the love affairs emphasized. The narrative leaps from topic to topic, full of clichés and overstatements (people are forever driving each other mad); the reader races through page after page of quaint, strange and gaudy illustrations. It is like a novel by the master himself . . . and so was Balzac's life.

J. D. O'Hara

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Worlds Beyond Ours

A Crown of Feathers
by Isaac Bashevis Singer
(Farrar, Straus, & Giroux; $8.95)

Like most of Singer's work, this largest collection of his tales started life in Yiddish and reaches us through the mediation of several translators and co-translators, not always including the author. The singular thing about these stories, then (and, in a sense that will be seen, a problem with them), is that they speak with one voice—clear, direct and uncolored, the cozy drone of a natural storyteller. Singer's moral urgency, his becoming reluctance to impose a decorative phrase on a declarative sentence, is not to be found in the English language; there is no suggestion that the original contains more than the English reflects. And despite the bony style, a kind of chant soon fills the reader's ears. No author was ever better named.

This is, in the best sense, unexperimental prose. In a time that sees many of the most interesting attempts at new short fiction devoted to deflecting the narrative impulse into stasis or disregarding it altogether, Singer tells us that human happenstance is still the richest of undiscovered countries. That he does it first in a dying language, and in what we're occasionally pleased to regard as a "dying" form, helps explain the repetitiveness that is *A Crown of Feathers*' sole flaw, after 200 pages turning the one voice into something of a monologue. (This problem could have been remedied by a simple expedient: two books, not because the material is so various but because it is so much the same.)

Singer has, essentially, two landscapes, two main figures in them and one theme that binds them all. The first setting is rural Poland before the Russian revolution and the other is what might be called New York cafeteria society after World War II. One character is a demon-haunted rabbi or his equivalent, the other an *émigré* Jew confronted by old demons in the new world. The theme is evoked beautifully by a line from the book's best story, "Grandfather and Grandson": "We block the channels of mercy with our iniquities."

This is a thought for the secular mind to choke on. Singer, with his love of ghosts and fondness for final matters, worries ideas like this one for page after page with fine insouciance. We constantly encounter an unabashed taste for ultimates and a gut desire for the One. A character suns himself on a Coney Island bench and determines "once and forever to break through the fence between idea and being." Another, observing a mundane street scene in Tel Aviv, hops to a mighty conclusion: "Where was the God of Israel? Why was he waiting so long?"

This blithe erasure of the distinction ordinarily drawn between ordinary life and the macrocosm that frames it gives Singer's work its charm, and the quiet suggestion that the distinction is in error gives it its valor. What we have here oddly resembles science fiction, but only because it is its opposite: studies of worlds beyond ours, but not made by us, or of the world we inhabit made unfamiliar through invasion by our several selves.

The talk of gods and demons is as real as bread. "Such is man that if he has a name for something it ceases to be a riddle." Singer insists on the continuity of the riddle, bemused by otherness but not bewildered by it. One of his characters is a ghost painter who insists that his work is good in itself although he puts the signature of a better (and deader) artist on it. "The dictionary calls this mystification, not fraud."

The thing-in-itself: noumenal reality. The province of philosophers and the holy mad is also the target of these stories, many of which are stories within stories, enhancing the illusion of the bardic voice. The campfire is replaced by the cafeteria table, the chanting poet by the reflecting exile, but one's sense of being audience to a timeless fable is undiminished. And—as is often the case with writing that is genuinely universal rather than merely presumptuously vague—one stumbles on specific echoes of our day.

On the day the TV networks announced their decision not to carry on with total coverage of the Watergate hearings, I read these lines: ". . . how

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long do [the newspapers] write about anything? Here in America, if the heavens would part and the angel Gabriel were to fly down with his six fiery wings and take a walk on Broadway, they would not write about it for more than a day or two." And as I was halfway through this book, the new war was born in the Middle East, and I suddenly seemed to be reading character sketches of some of the combatants.

Mortal paradox is always at the heart of Singer's stories, but it never seems grim; no matter how desperate the life, it's lifted by an element of humor that goes beyond despair. This may be what he refers to when he notes in an introduction, "The vandals who murdered millions of these people have destroyed a treasure of individuality that no literature dare try to bring back." Certainly the mood is crystallized in this exchange from "The Magazine":

> "There are still honest people. The trouble is that the wicked make all the noise and the just sleep."
> "They'll always sleep," I said.
> "They can be woken up."
> "If they're woken up, they'll become wicked."

These are unusually fine stories. They take joy in paradox but not in irony, and they're often tragic but never sad. If their resemblance to each other makes the book seem long, it also makes it cut deep. What might be a sign of limitation in a lesser writer in Singer must be seen as wisdom. He is one of our best storytellers—"our" meaning everybody.

Crawford Woods

Final Words

Good Morning: Last Poems

by Mark Van Doren
foreword by Richard Howard

(Hill & Wang; $6.95)

Mark Van Doren's life seemingly came full circle in the oriental sense of attaining a final transcendent wisdom; his perfection in so many areas makes us almost believe again in that 17th-century devotion of Donne's that death shall be no more. While the poems in *Good Morning* were "written from the acknowledged end," as Richard Howard says in his interesting essay-foreword, "the awareness of the threshold beside him, like Pascal's abyss, does not cause Mark Van Doren to recoil, to withdraw from life. Rather it is as if the very energy and impulses of his being, remembered, imagined, speculated upon, brooded over—were closer to language, to the one embrace he has always mastered, than ever before."

Despite the legends that grew about him and his accomplishments, his life had both public and private grief, principally from the death of people he loved: first his brother Carl, then lifelong friends like Joseph Wood Krutch and more recently former students and confidants like John Berryman and Thomas Merton, addressed here in "Death of a Monk (T.M.)."

> The best bottle of the best wine
> Tipped over all at once and spilled—
> Catch it, save it, but nobody
> Could. Nothing left but the fragrance.

Van Doren admired Merton unsentimentally, for "this merry mind/Had knives in it, had indignation," most importantly had wit, the ultimate sweetness, I believe, for Mark Van Doren. Knowing that life can vanish quickly, he savored everything in it except fools. "Eternity is now," he once wrote, and near the end of his life, he was still writing:

> This is the first poem. There was
> none
> Before it. Do not misunderstand me.
> This

"An intriguing and important analysis of how history has been mis-interpreted by policy-makers."
—Henry Owen,
The Brookings Institution

Like the generals who are always prepared for the last war, foreign policy-makers set their sights on the last peace. That is the thesis of Ernest R. May's new book, a provocative analysis of how the U.S. blundered into such disasters as Vietnam, and how we might do better in the future. "This wise little book ought to be on the reading list of every thoughtful, serious American." —Henry F. Graff, Columbia University. "I hope that many in Washington will study the book, for they can use whatever help they can obtain." —Norman A. Graebner, University of Virginia.

"LESSONS" OF THE PAST

The Use and Misuse of History in American Foreign Policy

Ernest R. May

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Is the first poem ever. No hint,
No help, no host of cousin, uncle, father
Objects, no mother language, nothing to start from
Except the silence, nothing to run with save
An odd, secret excitement, a strange need
To be there with words when the heartbeat happened
When the walls of the world, listening to each other,
Sighed, and I caught the sense of it
And fitted it to sound, as afterward
I did again when the great walls, groaning,
Grew louder; yet not deafening; the wonder
Even then was the clearness, was the joy.

Every new poem was, for Mark Van Doren, the "first poem." Howard notes that Van Doren is in that central position that causes difficulty in our modernist insistence on "placing" poets. Having never been in fashion, Mark Van Doren will never, as another astute critic has observed, go out of fashion. Called the one poet "most representative of his country and his times" by Howard Baker, Van Doren was totally devoid of any French influence, unusual for a 20th-century poet. His later poems suggest a country intelligence almost exclusively; there is just one poem in *Good Morning* with an urban theme, "Rain Beautifies the City."

The fact that Mark Van Doren was there "with words when the heartbeat happened" is a matter of importance to the continuity of English-American tradition in poetry, a long line from Dryden through Frost.

In familiar mode, as valedictory, the poet ponders a world that will not exist after his own death, "How Praise a World That Will Not Be":

How praise a world that will not be
Forever? Stillness then. Time
Sleeping, never to wake. No prince's
Kiss. No prince. Praise? Even
The echo of it dies, even
Memory, in the last brain
That loved it, withers away, and mind
Not even dozes, being done
With work that mattered not at all.
How then praise nothing?
Yet that day
Has never dawned. Here is the world
So beautiful, being old, so
Mindful of its maker—what
Of him when that day comes—you say
It must—what then of him, and of this
Place so crowded with his creatures—
With us all—oh, praise the time
That's left, here and now, praise
Him that by his own sweet will
May suddenly remake the world
Forever, ever, ever, ever.

William F. Claire

Fine Print

Doris Grumbach

There are extant more than 4000 letters of Anton Chekhov. The recently published *Letters of Anton Chekhov* (translated by Michael Henry Heim and selected by Simon Karlinsky; Harper & Row) contains a significant selection of this literate, original genius' correspondence, much of it never before published. Read together they make almost a biography by virtue of Simon Karlinsky's informative and scholarly introductions. There are fascinating letters on Chekhov's literary craftsmanship, on his esthetic theories, on the Dreyfus case. Altogether one of the most satisfying collections of letters in recent years, as well as a fine job of book-making.

I have been an admirer of the photography of Eliot Porter for some time, and particularly since the appearance a year ago of his beautiful book on Africa (*The Tree Where Man Was Born;* Norton) with text by Peter Matthiessen. Recently issued is a new and beautiful book, this one about the *Appalachian Wilderness* (Ballantine), with natural- and human-history notes by Edward Abbey. The text is less distinguished than the photographs, perhaps because it tries to do too many things—to acquaint us with Indian history, stories of the settlers, descriptions of flora and trees, all tossed into a compost with poems and quotations from other writers. There are no people in the pictures—only the land—and it is a fragile wilderness, likely to pass without an effort on the part of the states to keep it free of exploitation by mineral interests and all the ravages of pollution.

With the appearance in 1970 of his *Mark Twain: An American Prophet* (Houghton Mifflin), Maxwell Geismar has been anxious to prove that, contrary to popular and critical opinion, Twain was not an embittered old man who suddenly began to rail against the damned human race, but rather a lifelong radical and revolutionary whose early, so-called optimistic work has within it "gems" of bitter social criticism and comment, and whose late work is full of whole pieces of social satire. Making this point in his earlier work, Geismar offers us now an anthology of the great iconoclast's thinking on "race, religion, revolution and related matters, called *The Three R's*" (Bobbs-Merrill). The selections here are not new (see, for a less complete collection along the same lines, *Your Personal Mark Twain;* International Publishers, 1969). All the material has been printed elsewhere (some of it many times), but still it is of interest to see brought together under one cover the critical and prophetic writings of "the old tower," as Howells called him, whom Geismar (and Kipling) sees as in the tradition of Shakespeare and Cervantes. Twain's comments on the Philippine War alone (used often by protesters during the Vietnam war) is worth the price of admission.

It is always tragic when two books on the same subject follow fast upon each other into print. Noting the appearance in this issue of Douglas Day's life of Malcolm Lowry, I also wish to note the simultaneous arrival on my desk of a more personal account of Lowry's life, published in Canada by Press Porcopic and written by a young man, Tony Gilgallin, who lived in Lower Mexico and then "followed Lowry again by migrating to North Vancouver." *Lowry* is attractively illustrated and bound, carefully printed, and contains some of the same basic biographical material as Day's book. The writing is sometimes pretentious and often too full of quotation from Lowry's work and other sources, but the feel for the writer is loving,

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and it is clearly a book born out of close acquaintance and devotion.

A new press (Ardis, Ann Arbor, Michigan) is devoting itself to the publication (via IBM Univers) of works translated from the Russian. This month I've seen three works on Dostoevsky. The first volume of what will be three volumes is the diaries and notebooks 1860-1881 (*The Unpublished Dostoevsky*, edited by Carl R. Proffer). It is full of bits of accounting of his state of finances, as well as small jottings about what he will write, ideas he has about what he has already begun to write or has written. In these pages the general reader may begin to see the man as man as well as artist. Also published recently by this new press: *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (Mikhail Bakhtin), which is a classic in its field since its first appearance in Russian in 1929. This is the first full text; lovers of the novels will find Bakhtin's explication engrossing. I must confess to finding it hard to read this computer-produced kind of book, but then, if this is the price we must pay for getting one's hands on valuable insights, I suppose it can be borne.

The question of the use by scholars of copyrighted material for research purposes is a matter of pressing concern to both the publishing industry and the community of scholars. Recently Professor Richard J. Schoeck appeared before the Senate subcommittee on patents, trademarks and copyrights to appeal for what is now called "fair use" of copyrighted material, and against recent legislation which would make it unlawful to make even a single copy of protected material. That this law is broken everywhere and often is known to every scholar, teacher and student; the appeal before the subcommittee was to make legal what is now a fact. Obviously the law protects the author and the publisher from use of materials (even a single copy) without paying for it. Schoeck stated to the subcommittee he sees the law as a detriment to teaching, to scholarship and to research libraries like the Folger, a challenge to the fundamental procedures of scholarship. "The very quality of scholarship in the US is consequently threatened."

Graham Greene's *Collected Stories* (Viking) is one of those volumes (like Thomas Mann's *Stories of Three Decades;* Knopf, 1936) which promises to endure by virtue of the cumulative force of its individual items. One learns here the power of Greene in the short story and his indubitable mastery of the form. There is a short introduction by the author to these 44 stories (written from 1929 to almost 1970), in which he persists in calling the stories "escapes," much as he enjoyed the idea of calling some of his early novels "entertainments." He claims that a few of these stories arrived in his dreams but in whatever manner they came they are among the best in the English language and guarantee the permanence of this collection.

The Critical Point, Irving Howe's new collection of essays on literature and culture (Horizon) is a distinguished work. Written in the last 10 years (one essay, "Down and Out in New York and Chicago," under a different name appeared in this magazine in 1964), these essays are varied (on Zola, on Solzhenitsyn and George Lukacs, on Pound and Bellow and Gandhi, etc.), but they are held together by the strength and security of the critic's convictions and by his always-well-documented disagreements with the trendy and the popularly acclaimed. Editor of *Dissent,* Howe is particularly effective in casting a cold eye on and reassessing idols: Philip Roth, Kate Millett, Sylvia Plath. Whatever he says is well said, and it has, as well, the edge, bite and force of first-rate criticism.

Correspondence

Overseas Commitments

Sirs:

Peter Ognibene's article, "Troops Overseas" (*TNR,* Oct. 20, 1973), manages to discuss the problem without mentioning Hamlet—the logic of nuclear deterrence.

The object of allied nuclear policy is to maintain second-strike capability in order to prevent the use or the threat to use nuclear weapons in international politics. It follows that the presence of strong American conventional forces overseas must remain a permanent feature of allied security policy. Monetary and political arrangements among the allies should rest on a full acceptance of that intractable fact. The policy Mr. Ognibene advocates would leave the allies in a position where they would have to choose between abandoning

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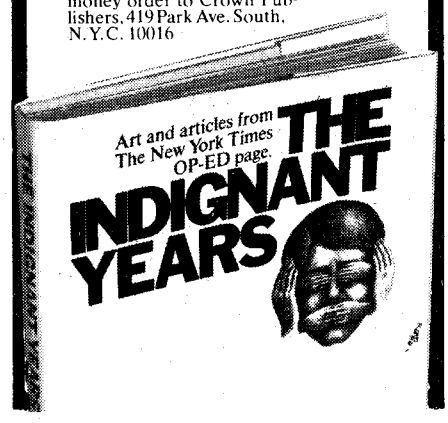

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vital interests in the event of crisis, or using nuclear weapons. This is the dilemma we should at all costs avoid. Conventional forces in forward positions are not a trip-wire for this policy of massive nuclear retaliation, but an indispensable tool of crisis management at the conventional level, as the events of September 1970 and the current Middle East crisis attest.

Massive retaliation, which Mr. Ognibene advocates, has long since been proved bankrupt. What President Eisenhower urged in 1963 was the presence of one American division in Germany, supported by 24 German divisions and German nuclear weapons. Is this Mr. Ognibene's recommendation?

Eugene V. Rostow
New Haven, Conn.

Sirs:

While Peter Ognibene's comments on US "troops overseas" point out the holes in Nixon administration arguments for keeping some 300,000 American servicemen in Europe, they are, like so many similar observations in the US press, altogether lacking in "Atlanticist" perspective.

Were Ognibene to follow his own trail, staked out by his perception that "defense" against an overwhelmingly improbable Soviet attack on Western Europe constitutes an implausible reason for those 300,000 GIs and that this is generally recognized in Washington, he might discover that a US military "presence" in Europe forms an effective obstacle to European military unification—something the United States desires no more than Common Market-wide agricultural and monetary policies which, of course, have been dealt very heavy blows by Nixon's dollar devaluations and trade offensives since August 1971. He might also find that American military forces represent a powerful "psychological deterrent" not so much to "the Russians" as to socialists, communists and neutralists throughout Western Europe, a signal to leftists of all shades that Washington stands resolutely behind capitalist social structures in their nations. Considerations like these, based on a defense of concrete interests, ought to be examined much more closely (particularly in view of what "revisionist" historians are telling us about the origins of the Cold War and the 1949 decision to send US soldiers to Europe in the first place). Doing so will likely bring us closer to an understanding of how US troop levels in Europe are maintained in an age of "détente" as well as why "responsible" politicians in Europe harbor such schizophrenic feelings toward them.

Richard B. Du Boff
Bryn Mawr, Pa.

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If you file your tax return in January, the Internal Revenue Service will have your refund for you in four to five weeks. File later and you may have to wait as long as eight weeks.

Errata

Sirs:

Edgar Allen Brown, a retired officer of the Lone Star Company in Dallas, was erroneously identified in an article in the August 11 issue of *The New Republic* as a secret contributor to the 1972 Nixon campaign. The reference should have been to E. W. Brown, Jr., chairman of the board, Lutcher and Moore, Cypress Lumber Co., Orange, Texas; Gulfport Shipping Co., Port Arthur, Texas. The confusion resulted from a mistaken identification by persons who had made the list available to me at the time. I regret any inconvenience this error may have caused Mr. Edgar Allen Brown.

Tad Szulc
Washington, DC

On John Reed

Sirs:

Sidney Hook's review of Barbara Gelb's book on John Reed and Louise Bryant (*TNR*, Sept. 29, 1973) is, in thinly veiled disguise, a review of Reed's *Ten Days That Shook the World*. Although this review may disappoint the author, I found it to be a long overdue reevaluation of a work that, although historically important in the converts it made to Bolshevism, is in fact a mere panegyric, something in the nature of Fourth of July rhetoric. Hook has performed a real service. However I must take issue with the following statement in the review: "He [Reed] accepted [the Bolshevik] version of the July Days when they sought to overthrow Kerensky as a spontaneous mass action." How wrong was Reed about this, how right is Hook? The truth is somewhere in the middle, according to Alexander Rabinovitch, author of the best book to date on the July Days, and whose conclusions I would certainly support over either Reed or Hook because of the scholarly effort he has made to dig out the facts and because my own research in the general area would seem to bear out those conclusions.

In his *Prelude to Revolution* Rabinovitch writes: "To sum up the Bolshevik role in the preparation and organization of the July uprising then, it *seems* that the movement was in part an outgrowth of months-long Bolshevik anti-government propaganda and agitation, that rank and file Bolsheviks from the Petrograd factories and military regiments played a leading role in its organization, and that the leadership of the [Bolshevik] Military Organization and part of the [Bolshevik] Petersburg Committee *probably* encouraged it against the wishes of Lenin and the Central Committee."

One of the great questions facing Lenin in preparing his forces for the November coup was how to overcome the enormous disappointment among the armed forces in Petrograd as a result of his failure to accept the leadership expected of him in July.

Stanley W. Page
New York City

Kauffmann, *from page 20*

still *Tokyo Story*, but *Late Autumn* is by the same very fine artist. It supports Schrader's observation: "In every Ozu film, the whole world exists in one family. The ends of the earth are no more distant than outside the house."

Another New York Film Festival has just staggered to an end. I won't repeat

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my dislike of the very idea of these festivals: I'll just note that among the films I saw, there were two fine ones: a monster of two and a half hours, a short of 11 minutes.

Andrei Tarkovsky (b. 1932) made *Andrei Rublev* in the USSR in 1966. Rublev was a monk and icon painter (c. 1360-1430) whose work is preeminent in Russian art. Tarkovsky's film ran into political trouble, presumably because it showed an individualist under authoritarianism. Its release was delayed, then its export. It was shown at the Cannes Festival in 1969 in a three-hour version, which was a condensation. The New York version was a half hour shorter than that.

Still, two things are evident, even in this lacerated version. Tarkovsky was not making a straight biographical film: he was presenting a series of historical panels through which Rublev moves, to re-create the Russia of that day. Second, he re-creates it. *Andrei Rublev* contains some of the most authentic historical reality I have seen on screen, done with lavishness, intensity and sweep. I don't expect ever to forget such episodes as the sacking of a town by Tartars or the casting of a giant bell. I'm not talking about capital-B Beauty of the sort that every Technicolor spy thriller has these days. (*Andrei Rublev* is in black and white, except for its last moments.) I mean historical-artistic imagination made manifest through cinematic talent.

The fate of this film must be one of the decade's major crimes in the film world, a world that does not lack for crimes.

Eleven minutes of wicked joy from Bruno Bozzetto, the Italian maker of animated films. I've seen two previous cartoon shorts of his (both at the NY Festival), *Alpha Omega* and *The Two Castles*, and I went to this program (the feature was unimportant) to see his new short. *Opera* is wonderful. It starts as if it were going to be on its subject—bosomy sopranos, squalling tenors, etc.—funny enough and mordant. But quickly it swirls away and uses the opera house only as a base for a savage lightning tour of just about all the world's current problems—pollution and war among them. The drawing, color and sound are excellent, the speed is diabolically lighthearted. What an 11 minutes! Bozzetto deserves—*we* deserve—to have entire programs devoted to his work. If he isn't the most intelligent, witty, caustic, gifted film animator now working, I'd be grateful to learn of a better.

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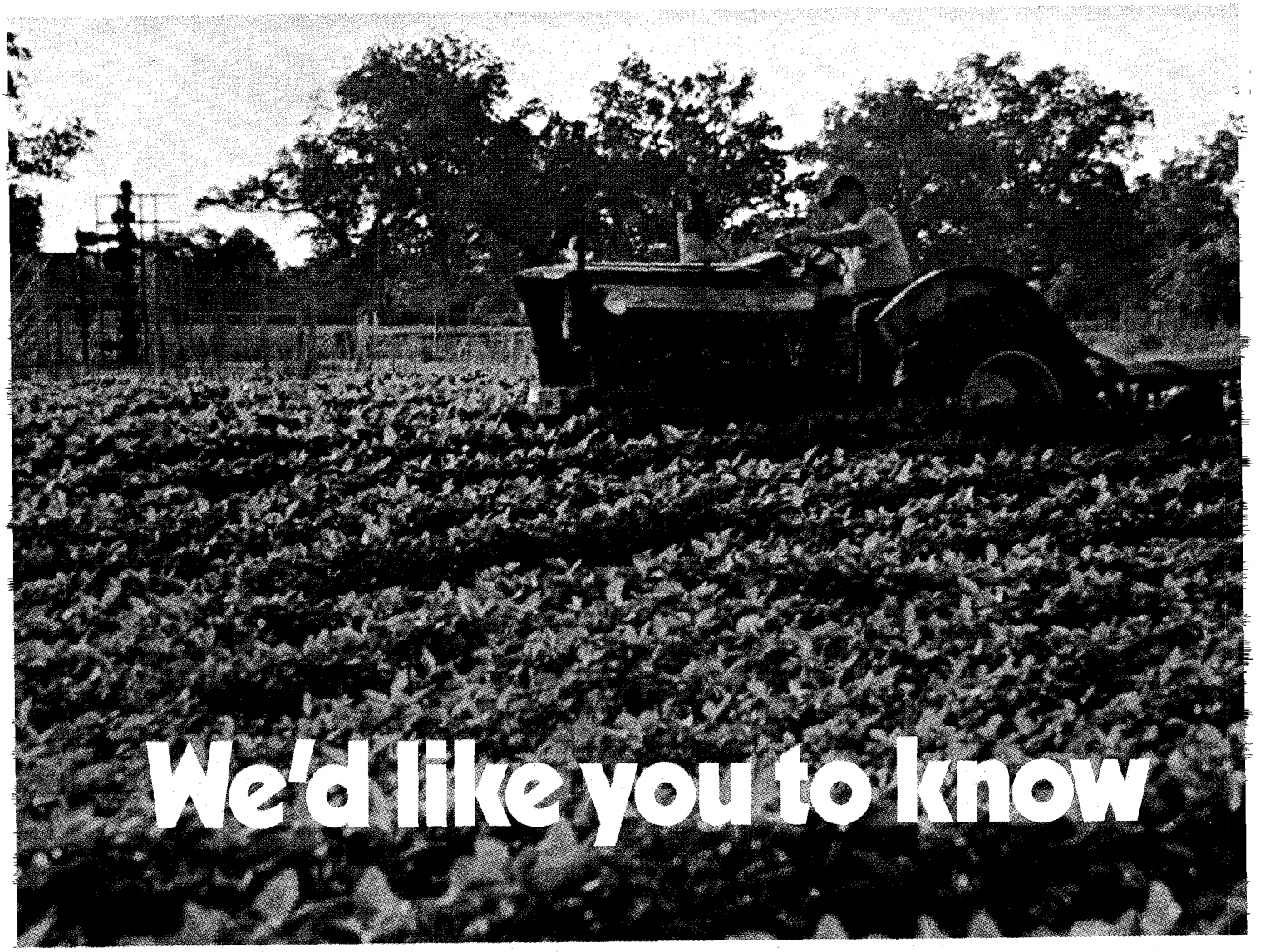

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